

LIPPINCOTT'S MONTHLY MAGAZINE.

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TAKEN BY SIEGE.

CHAPTER III.

RUSH HURLSTONE was not the only young man in New York in love with Helen Knowlton. There was scarcely a man in the city who was not in the same condition. I cannot say that all were as hard hit as our young friend, but several of them thought they were,—which amounted to the same thing for the time being. This is not to be wondered at, either. Helen Knowlton was a woman of remarkable attractions. Aside from her gifts as a singer (and she was now at the zenith of her powers), she was a clever woman, a student of books and of men, and with sentiment enough to enable her to interpret poetic characters most successfully. While not, perhaps, what would be called a beauty, she was strikingly handsome. According to classic ideas, her features were not perfect; yet one seldom sees finer eyes or a straighter nose, or a handsomer mouth than hers when she was talking or laughing. Some people thought her mouth too large, but Rush never liked a small mouth in man or woman: a large mouth with glistening teeth always attracted him. Her eyes were brown, with jet-black lashes and brows, the former so thick and long that when he looked into her eyes he thought of fire burning its way through shrubbery. Her hair was brown, and grew in waving lines around her brow, and the line that marked its growth at the back of her neck was as clearly defined as though it had been drawn with a pencil. This may seem a small matter to speak of, but it is a great beauty in a woman. Her figure was exceedingly well proportioned, and she dressed with the most exquisite taste. With all these physical attractions, she had an un-

usually bright mind. She was constantly adding to her store of knowledge, and what she knew she knew thoroughly. If she had not been a prima donna, she would have distinguished herself in some other walk in life. As to her character, it was peculiar. When Rush came to know her intimately, he told her she was the most singular combination of baby and woman he had ever met; and so she was. She lived in the world, but she was not a woman of the world. She could not say one thing and mean another, and her friends used to tell her that was an accomplishment a prima donna, of all persons, should possess. She was credulous, yet suspicious; she was practical to a fault, yet sentimental; she seemed cold in her nature, yet she unconsciously hungered for love. She made friends easily, and took no pains to keep them, yet somehow or other they stuck by her. She was at this time just a little spoiled, —and with reason. The town was at her feet. There wasn't a man, woman, or child who would not have been proud to do her a favor. Ladies vied with one another in entertaining her at their houses, young men fought for an introduction, and old men toasted her at the clubs. I believe that if she had chosen to have Union Club men pull her carriage instead of horses they would have humored her whim. Everything new that came out in the way of bric-à-brac, jewelry, or books was sent to her on the instant by some known or unknown admirer. Artists painted her in their pictures, and poets lauded her in their lyrics. She had had so much of this adoration that she took it almost as a thing of course; yet she was pleased by every new attention, and never tired even of the flowers that were showered upon her. Guarded like a hot-house plant herself, the breath of scandal had never blown towards her. You could not look at her and believe that she was otherwise than pure, and the veriest old *roué* would have found himself awed by her innocence. Yet she was no prude. She was fond of the society of men, and enjoyed a good time as much as any one, but she was possessed by a very strong idea of what a woman should and should not do. Her position made it necessary for her to be particularly careful, and, although she was twenty-five years old, she had never entertained a man alone in a room in her life. Foreigners, with their ideas of women on the stage, could not understand her, but none the less they joined with her countrymen in burning incense to her.

Helen Knowlton's parents had died when she was a baby, leaving her in charge of an aunt, Miss Rebecca Sandford, her mother's sister, who was known to half of Helen's friends and the whole musical profession as Aunt Rebecca. This good lady was a dragon of virtue. She looked upon her niece as a child, and treated her as such; and, as it was

kindly treatment, it had the effect of keeping her young,—so that at twenty-five she was as fresh and youthful in her ideas as most girls of eighteen. Aunt Rebecca never let "that child" know any of the business details of her profession. The good lady stood between her niece and the managers. She read the contracts; Helen signed them. It was a shrewd manager who could get the better of her in a bargain, and the managers knew it, and respected her cleverness. There were, naturally, a great many visitors to the little Gothic cottage in West Twentieth Street where the prima donna made her home; but they all had to pass the eye of Aunt Rebecca before they could see her niece, and even then the matron seated herself in the room, let the visitor be man, woman, or child, and never left till he or she had gone. She did not always take part in the conversation, but would often busy herself with a French novel (Aunt Rebecca was very partial to Georges Sand) and let the young people talk of their own affairs. It must be confessed that she rather overdid the guardianship at times; but if any very intimate friend suggested this, she would say, "I don't want to give wagging tongues a chance. If any gossiping creature says such and such a thing occurred at such a time, I can reply, 'My friend, you lie, for I was there.'" Aunt Rebecca used sharp language at times; but, as she said, "What is the use of beating around the bush? You might as well eat the devil as drink his broth."

Never having known anything different, Helen was well satisfied with her aunt's guardianship, and never questioned it. Sometimes she would say to her young friends, as they started for a walk in Fifth Avenue, "I envy you your freedom to come and go as you please, but I suppose while I am a public singer I must accept the situation and give up the usual amusements of young women of my age." So she would go back to her room and superintend the making of a costume with so much interest that she would forget all about the ordinary pleasures of life, and be wholly wrapped up in the dry details of her profession. She studied hard every day, and exercised and ate as carefully as an oarsman in training for a race. Properly speaking, she had never had any childhood, as she had begun her studies when very young and had been singing since she was in her teens. She liked the life of a singer and she didn't like it. The act of singing was itself a pleasure, and there was nothing in the world so exciting to her as a large and enthusiastic audience. "If an audience only knew how much better music it gets from an artist when it gives her something in return," she used to say, "I think it would always show a sympathetic spirit." She had little to complain of on the score of coldness in her audiences. In New York she was always treated as though she were the particular

favorite of every auditor, and the applause when she came upon the stage only ceased when she began to sing.

It is not surprising that a woman of this sort should have had many admirers. It was said in society that she could marry any man she wanted,—that they all would only be too happy to bestow their hands and fortunes upon her, from Uncle Lightfoot Myers to that much-courted young man, Mr. West Hastings. Aunt Rebecca smiled at the attentions of Uncle Lightfoot, but she was more severe upon West Hastings, though the latter was of a suitable age, had an income of eighty thousand dollars a year, and was considered a most desirable *parti* altogether. He was looked upon as a confirmed bachelor until he met Helen Knowlton, to whom he began paying devoted attentions very early in their acquaintance. Hastings was a man of the world, a member of half a dozen clubs, and lived more like a European than do most Americans. He had inherited his money, and had never done a day's work in his life, which was so much the worse for him; but he was not so good-for-nothing as are many of his countrymen similarly gifted by fortune. It was said that he patronized the ballet in the persons of its *premières*; but, however this may be, you could never find a woman in society who would believe it, for there was nothing in his manner to betoken that he was not a man of the most exquisite refinement. If it had been Livingston Dash, or Charlie Vernon, or any one of half a dozen other well-known club-men, who had been so accused, the accusation might have been believed. When Archie Tillinghast told his cousin Bessie Archer that he had seen West Hastings's coupé, with the blinds up, driving away from the stage door of Niblo's Garden during the run of "The Black Crook," she left the room in indignation, and would hardly speak to him the rest of the evening, though he was her escort to the Charity Ball. When it became generally known that Hastings was paying marked attentions to Helen Knowlton, the women said that she would do well to accept him,—that a marriage with him would be a brilliant close for a brilliant career; but some of the men who knew him best shook their heads, and said that, while West Hastings was a "good fellow," he was hardly calculated to make a good husband; that he would get tired of the best woman in the world if he was married to her, and they wanted to see Helen Knowlton married to a man who would make her happy to the end of her days.

That Hastings was interested in Miss Knowlton is not surprising. She was the most fêted woman in New York, and she was the one woman whose head was not turned by his attentions. He had been used to a different sort of woman on the stage. Here was a prima donna who was as much of a lady and as pure a woman as his own

sister. He began by pouring the ordinary compliments of a man of the world into her ear (he had to do it in Italian, for Aunt Rebecca was always on hand); but he soon saw that it bored her, and that she was only interested when he talked sense. He had travelled far and wide, had heard the native music of many countries, and could be very interesting if he chose. That she listened to him best when he appeared to the best advantage pleased him. Indeed, she pleased him altogether, for she gave him a new sensation, and if there was anything in this world that Hastings honestly loved, it was a new sensation. He was beginning to think that he was in love with Helen Knowlton; and so he was, to a certain extent. He thought her cold, but he also thought her the most interesting person he had ever met; and then he liked to be considered the favored suitor of the most popular prima donna in the country. It pleased him that the men at the club called him a "lucky dog," and he enjoyed hearing it whispered, "That is West Hastings with Miss Knowlton." "I believe I'll marry that girl," he would sometimes say to himself, never taking into consideration the fact that "that girl" might refuse to marry him. Then he would think of his luxurious bachelor quarters, of his perfect freedom from all domestic ties, and he would conclude to wait awhile longer before making a formal offer of marriage, believing that he could occupy the field as long as he cared to.

Helen Knowlton liked West Hastings very much. He was attentive and amusing, and he didn't ask her to marry him. I think that if he had put the question seriously she would have refused him. She was in love with her art. Music was the only thing that realized her ideal. She looked upon men, the little she saw of them, as pleasant companions, that was all. Music had satisfied her longings up to this time, and Aunt Rebecca had instilled into her mind the idea that men were a delusion and a snare,—that her art was the only thing upon which she could rely. "The more you do for men, the more you *may* do," said that wise woman; "but the more you do for art, the more art will do for you. Don't tell me! I haven't lived all these years among men for nothing. They can't take me in, and they never could." I don't think the man ever lived who could have been induced to take Miss Rebecca Sandford in, for he would have known that if he did so he would have to give the reins into her hands and resign the driver's box forever.

Aunt Rebecca didn't intend that her niece should marry, at least for many a long day, and her influence was very strong. She wouldn't say, "You mustn't know So and So," or try any of the usual means of keeping a girl from falling in love; but she would with her witty tongue put a man in so ridiculous a light that Helen could never

think of him again without laughing. Aunt Rebecca was very clever in her way, and she was more than a match for her niece. If she had once given Helen a chance to fall seriously in love, the girl's attachment would have been too strong to be shaken by her shafts of ridicule. But she did not. When she thought West Hastings was becoming a little too attentive, she asked Helen if she had noticed how he picked all the truffles out of the *pâté* and put them on his own plate, and selected the delicate bits of the celery for himself. Helen had not noticed this, but she supposed that if her aunt said so it must be true. Aunt Rebecca was always ready with an anecdote against Hastings, which she told with a good-natured laugh that entirely diverted suspicion. No one knew why she was so opposed to Helen's marrying, except that she wanted her to make even more of a career and add still more to her bank-account. And she really did not believe that a woman was any happier for being married. "Marriage is a lottery, where all the tickets are blanks," she would say; and she got her niece to be very much of her opinion. In the case of West Hastings, Aunt Rebecca's plan was to impress Helen with the idea that he was a selfish old bachelor (he was only thirty), and every little thing he did that might be regarded as selfish she magnified. He was a selfish man, there is no doubt about that. Most wealthy bachelors are. They have had few or none of the experiences that are supposed to sweeten a man's disposition. Hastings had everything in the world that he wanted, and he was never crossed in any of his pleasures. It piqued him a little that Helen Knowlton did not seem to be more impressed by his attentions, but he never for a moment dreamed that he would be unsuccessful in a serious suit of that young woman. At the time Rush Hurlstone saw him escorting Miss Knowlton to her carriage at the stage door of the Academy of Music, more than one-half of society thought that he was engaged to be married to her, though neither of the persons most interested had heard the rumor. Aunt Rebecca took a wise course in the Hastings affair. From the day Helen first met him at Bessie Archer's "coming-out" ball, she showed a greater liking for him than for any man she had met before, and the astute Miss Sandford said to herself, "To break this off I must be diplomatic. It never does to oppose young people openly in matters of this sort. Let him come to see her. I will stop him from going too far if I can, and if I can't I shall accept the situation gracefully (he has eighty thousand dollars a year) and consider myself shelved for the rest of my days. But I don't propose to let him go too far. I don't see myself shelved at my time of life."

Aunt Rebecca enjoyed the business details of the operatic profession as much as her niece did the artistic part. To outwit the managers was

as exciting to her as a game of chess is to some people, and she loved to plan a winter's campaign. No travelling was too hard for her, not even a jump from Boston to Chicago. She could make herself as happy on a car as in a drawing-room. Her mind was on the gallop all the time, and it could work as well in one place as in another: indeed, she contended that the motion of a train only stimulated her thoughts. Helen was naturally of an active disposition, but she had grown passive under her aunt's dominating influence, and did not assert herself as much as she should have done. Once in a great while she would rebel, but it was a mere flash in the pan. Few people who did not know Helen Knowlton can imagine such a person, and there is no doubt that she was an exception to the rule of womanhood. Just at the time of which I write, she was absorbed in the study of her new part, and the thousand-and-one things that had to be attended to before the eventful night on which the new opera was to be produced. Every one in New York who had a picture or a book relating in any way to Helen of Troy sent it to her, and all took a personal interest in the presentation of the opera. The night was drawing near. The Saturday matinée was postponed that she might get more rest and study, and there was to be a full-dress rehearsal on Sunday, to which the critics of the press and a favored few were to be invited. Monday night was the great night, and you may imagine that she was more or less nervous in anticipation. Uncle Lightfoot Myers sent her a set of gold bands for her hair, with his best wishes for her success, and West Hastings sent her a beautifully-wrought golden girdle, with the inscription, "And, like another Helen, fired another Troy," engraved on the inside.

It seemed as though every one in New York wanted to have some part in the production of the opera beyond the mere buying of seats. In that they were generous enough, for everything in the house was bought up the day the box-office opened. Monday came. There was a flurry of spring snow in the morning, but by afternoon it was bright and clear. Helen did not get up till twelve o'clock. She ate the lightest sort of breakfast, and at four had a heartier meal. All day long she was not allowed to speak,—which was no deprivation, as she did not feel like it, being too much excited for words. At seven o'clock the carriage was at the door, and she was driven to the Academy with Aunt Rebecca and her maid. For the next hour everything was confusion in the dressing-room at the foot of the little stairway. Stitches that had dropped had to be caught up, a tight sleeve had to be let out, and all the thousand-and-one details that crowd into the last moments of a great occasion had to be attended to. As the prima donna stood in front of the long mirror, maid and costumer busily at work upon her skirts, she

would open her mouth and run a scale to see if her voice was in condition, while the narrow walls trembled with her song. When the finishing touches had been put to her toilet, the manager came in to see how she looked. "Beautiful, my child! *Mon Dieu!* how exquisite! Superb!" And he kissed both her hands enthusiastically and retired. Then came the leader of the orchestra, with a similar ecstasy of admiration, and the announcement that it was time for him to begin,—that the ballet had been danced, and the men were tuning up for the opera. Was she ready? "Yes; begin at once. I am nervous as a witch; but nothing is gained by delay."

The house was packed: there was not a square inch of standing-room in the place by half-past eight. Even the boxes were filled, the usually tardy occupants being as anxious as the family circle to welcome the prima donna when she came upon the stage in her new rôle. And they did welcome her. They gave her three cheers, and would have added a "tiger" if any one had suggested it.

But where was Rush Hurlstone all this time? He was not far away. Being unable to buy a seat,—they had been sold before he came to New York, and the speculators' prices were beyond his means,—he acted upon the suggestion of his friend of the ballet and accepted the stage-manager's offer to don a Grecian dress and go on the stage as a Trojan warrior. You would have supposed that he was going to sing the leading tenor rôle, he was so exceedingly nervous on this occasion. But it was not the thought of facing an audience that unstrung his nerves; he knew well enough that he would not be seen, or, if seen, recognized: it was the fact that he would be taking a part, no matter how small, in the same performance with Helen Knowlton, and that he would be within touching-distance of her garments perhaps a dozen times in the evening.

It was a great occasion, and the new opera was a complete success. Helen never sang more beautifully. In the great aria just before her flight with Paris she brought the house to its feet by her dramatic singing and acting. Uncle Lightfoot Myers leaned out of his box at an angle that imperilled his life, and waved his opera-hat, shouting "Brava" until he was hoarse. West Hastings, who occupied a proscenium box with his sister, Mrs. Dick Griswold, stood up and applauded with an elegance that was remarked by every one in the house; and Mrs. Dick not only threw the bouquet that lay on the railing of her box, but unpinned the bunch of roses at her corsage and threw them at the prima donna's feet. Mrs. Vandewater Tod, who occupied the next box, not to be outdone in enthusiasm, took a large diamond star from her hair, and, pinning it to a bouquet, threw it with excited

fingers at the singer; but it fell short of its mark, and, striking the venerable bass-viol player on his bald head, bounced into the orchestra. The house roared with good-natured laughter as the old man, after feeling his head to see that the skull was not cracked, picked up the bouquet with its precious addition and handed it to the smiling prima donna, while the family circle shouted and the boxes waved their handkerchiefs. The ushers were worn out carrying "floral tributes" down the aisle; and, altogether, such a night had never been known. The most excited person in the house was Rush Hurlstone. By a lucky chance, he was standing in the wings in all the dignity of his Trojan armor when Helen made a hurried exit. Coming from the brilliantly-lighted stage into the dark behind the scenes, she struck her foot against a carelessly-laid gas-pipe and almost pitched into his arms. He put out his hand, and she caught hold of it quickly. The thing did not take half a minute. "*Grazie*," said she, lightly, thinking of course that he was one of the regular Italian chorus. Then she passed on to her dressing-room, followed by her maid bearing her train, and her aunt, who had just thrown a wrap across her shoulders. Rush blushed scarlet under his warrior's beard. He was afraid the men standing around would hear the thumping of his heart against his tin armor. When no one was looking, he raised the back of the hand she had touched to his lips and kissed it; and then he wondered how he could have been such a fool.

When the opera was over, Rush thought it no more than polite for him to accompany Madame Cella and her daughter home; but when he went to look for them he found that they had gone as soon as the dancing was finished. He was not sorry, for now he could linger around the place and perhaps see Helen again. As he stood by the door leading into the auditorium, he saw half the wealth and fashion of the city pass through on its way to the prima donna's dressing-room to congratulate her upon her great success. He could catch an occasional glimpse of her, standing there in her classic robes, a veritable Helen, giving her beautiful hand to this one and a gracious word to the other. Rush felt like throwing himself at her feet, or (like another Paris) bearing her off in his arms. He watched the men as they talked and laughed with her, until he was beside himself with jealousy. He recognized West Hastings at once, having seen him at the stage door the week before, and felt certain that the confidence of his manner in addressing the prima donna was the assurance of proprietorship. Uncle Lightfoot Myers came rushing in, his gray hair matted on his brow, and the perspiration running down his florid cheeks.

"I deserve a kiss, my dear, for what I've done for you to-night,"

he exclaimed. "Two pairs of gloves split into shreds, my collar wilted, and my voice all gone shouting 'Brava!' Come, now, where is my reward?"

"Your reward is in the consciousness of having done a good deed," answered the singer, gayly, giving him her hand, which he kissed with old-fashioned gallantry.

"Ah, Uncle Lightfoot," said Mrs. Dick Griswold, "you are too young a man to be claiming an old man's privileges."

"Nonsense! nonsense!" said Uncle Lightfoot, straightening his necktie and looking as pleased as Punch. "I'm old enough to be Helen's father."

He was really old enough to be her grandfather; but it would have been a cruel person who could tell him so.

Men and women came crowding in and out of the prima donna's room, but Rush noticed that West Hastings stood his ground and showed no signs of going, and he also noticed that he stooped down now and then and whispered some words in the singer's ear which seemed to give her a good deal of pleasure, for she would raise her eyes to his with a look that Rush would have died for. He didn't know then that a woman, particularly a prima donna, may look everything and mean nothing. Finally there was a lull in the gay chatter, and the manager entered the room, followed by a somewhat seedy-looking young man with keen bright eyes and a well-shaped head. He whispered something in Italian to Miss Knowlton. An expression of annoyance passed over her face, but she was exceedingly polite when the manager introduced Mr. Grady, of *The Dawn*, who begged that he might ask her a few questions. The young man was evidently embarrassed at meeting so many outsiders in the room, and the prima donna, though she was annoyed at the interview, was most gracious in her manner, particularly as she detected the ends of West Hastings's moustache turning scornfully upward, and feared that the reporter also might notice his sneer. Aunt Rebecca would have taken the interviewer under her protection at once, but she was striking for bigger game. She had the musical critic of *The Daily Trumpet* by the ear, and was calling his critical attention to the remarkable *fioriture* added by her niece to the grand aria. Rush recognized in the reporter one of the men he had seen at the office of *The Dawn*, and he listened attentively to learn how the process of "interviewing" was carried on.

"How were you pleased with your reception, Miss Knowlton?" the reporter inquired.

"I was delighted: nothing could have been more cordial or more gratifying," she answered.

"Is the music of the opera pleasing to sing?"

"Thoroughly so. It does not strain the voice, yet it displays its best qualities."

"What impressed you most in the performance?"

"I can tell you what impressed me the most, Helen," exclaimed Mrs. Dick Griswold, bursting in upon the interview. "It was in the scene with Tartalli, when you took the poor old thing's hand and made her come down to the footlights. She hadn't done anything, to be sure, but your manner in insisting upon her sharing the applause with you was beautiful. It almost made me cry; for, although I never heard Tartalli in her prime, I know she used to be a favorite singer, and I always feel the liveliest pity for favorites who have outlived their popularity but who still have to keep before the public to earn their bread and butter. Put that in your paper, my dear sir, and you will have a charming incident," rattled on the vivacious Mrs. Dick. The reporter thanked her and the prima donna also, and bowed himself out of the room, the manager following at his elbow. "The poor fellow didn't get much material for an interview there," thought Rush. "He'll have to make his excuses to the city editor to-night." The talking was resumed in the dressing-room, but only in the shape of good-nights. West.Hastings said something to Uncle Lightfoot in an undertone, and the old beau put Mrs. Griswold's arm through his. "I'll take you home, Mrs. Dick; and, if it isn't too late, I'll stop and have a rubber with that lazy Dick of yours, who, I'll wager, is toasting his toes and reading the stock-market reports before the fire."

"I'll gladly accept your invitation, Uncle Lightfoot, and we'll leave West to Helen's tender mercies. Will you take good care of him, Helen, and keep him out of mischief?" said Mrs. Dick.

"If that be possible," replied the prima donna, laughing. "But in the mean time I shall have to ask him to take a seat in the greenroom while I get ready for the street."

At this all the visitors retired, and Rush hurried off to a room somewhere up among the flies, where he transformed himself from a soldier of Troy into a peaceful citizen of New York.

(To be continued.)

BACKWOODS PRERAPHAELITES.

MADAME returned to her native land almost a stranger. For, although she had never ceased to remember that native land with affection, years following years had stolen much of her young self away. Those spent at home had carried with them her youthful enthusiasm; those spent abroad had replaced her original spread-eagle Americanism with habits of closer and clearer observation and more thoughtful judgment of other lands than her own.

She was an American who remembered America rather than realized it, and came again to her own with a curious mingling of the alert inquisitiveness of the foreigner and the dreamy pensiveness of an exile.

"*Nous voilà enfin arrivés dans le pays du Yank!*" exclaimed a French fellow-voyager.

It is curious how really Française she felt as he said this, how fully she shared his curiosity concerning the genus Yank upon its native heath.

"*Voulez-vous a morning paper?*" grinned a Battery newsboy in her ear.

Instantly she was not in the least French, and frowned severely upon the gamin, that he had not recognized her Yankhood at sight.

From the Boulevards, the Théâtre Français, and the Champs Élysées it was but eleven days to the American backwoods. Madame seemed thus suddenly thrust into a new world. For not only was the human element strange, but so also was the vividly—almost crudely—colored landscape, the dazzling atmosphere, more than all, the infinitely high and infinitely blue sky. It was as if she were suddenly shot into space, so vivid was the realization of a largeness and freedom that she had never known before.

The last stage of the journey was accomplished by means of a rickety narrow-gauge railway branching away from a somewhat less amateur line, which, in its turn, departed from a main thoroughfare of travel. A train consisting of one mean car with four passengers, two of them drunken lumbermen, behind twenty empty tan-cars, trundled through miles of ragged forest, where the only visible signs of man were the charred stumps of trees, and now and then a weather-beaten saw-mill with clustering rude dwellings of blackened pine.

The end was a mountain town of five or six hundred inhabitants in a saw-mill and tanning region of one of the most sparsely settled counties of a yet—in portions—sparsely-settled Middle State. Twenty

years ago neither axe nor fire had been laid at a single tree, and up to the present moment there are only fifteen thousand souls in the rough and unkempt county. Yet the town already brags of its "palatious mansions" (*vide* the county journal),—funny little pine boxes of houses painted white and trimmed with tatting or crochet edging,—a few "stores," an "opera-house," two baby wooden churches of half-breed Gothic, one or two hotels, a court-house, and a roller-skating-rink of pea-green pine.

At night huge fires burn all through the village, flashing and snapping with loud, portentous sound. These are the gas-lights,—natural gas rising from the earth and burning massively and entirely uncovered in the open air. The gas is likewise carried into all the parlor-, cooking-, and store-stoves of the community. Not only are the dinners cooked by it, but the inhabitants as well.

It is a primitive community, where he is rich who has ten thousand dollars at interest, and he not poor who lives by precarious "chores."

In Europe we should be peasants, laborers, and rustic shopmen; here we are every one of us superior to the played-out occupants of tottering European thrones, every one of us filled with unaffected contempt for any other nation than our own, every one of us convinced that Europeans are a mean, decrepit race, continuing in the effete Old World only because too weak to escape to the New.

Scorn, indignation, incredulity, are the dominant emotions excited by the statement that United States postage-stamps have not their face value all over the world, and that the coin of our country is not eagerly grasped in every mart and bazaar.

"Don't them Britishers know what *real* money is?" queried disgusted chorus.

"I think likely I should have to brush up in history to go to Europe," said a county editor. "I always mix up Jane of Arc with Lady Mary Jane Grey, Queen of Scots. But then what's the use of going there? The Yooropeans all come here, and the hull country's played out anyway."

This editor's education leaves much to be desired in the way of Yooropean history, but in all the details of his own he is thoroughly at home, as well as with every intricacy of past and contemporaneous American politics where advantage leans to the Democratic side.

"Do they keep court fools nowadays?" he asked later.

"They're all fools," spake up sudden answer. "Ef they wa'n't, they wouldn't stay in *that* God-forsaken country."

Which remarks point a difference between American provincial patriotism and French or English.

The French peasant is so absolutely sure of the superiority of France and Frenchmen over all the rest of the universe that it never occurs to him to assert it, any more than to call attention to the fact that the sun shines or that fire is hot. The British yokel abuses his own country, but always with a sort of pride in the British superiority which can find something to blame even in that most perfect result of human civilization. Both French and English are too sure of their own proud eminence to find it worth their time and breath to point out the inferiority of other countries. The American, on the contrary, while just as utterly sure that his country is the admired and envied of nations, never ceases to tip-tilt the nose and shoot out the lip at all things not American.

The Italian has more of the French and English feeling than of the American; and in Rome an American was once complaisantly and patronizingly assured that probably the reason why the American accent in speaking Italian was noticeably better than the English was because "an Italian discovered your country."

He or she who in rural America dares assert a preference for anything foreign, to set Bass's XX above Milwaukee lager, or French artichokes above green corn, is regarded as half-way a traitor to self-government and the Rights of Man.

"I'm going to stop my subscription to my *New York Weekly Times*," said our squire. "It's got too much in it about furrin parts. I jest believe it's in the pay of the British! What do I care whether the Maydee is dead, or alive and kicking? I'd ruther read about lynching niggers down South. *That's good American nooz.*"

"How *can* you like England, and you a born American?" asked one of Madame's compatriots. "I declare, 'tain't Christian!"

Said another, upon another occasion, with the usual American acerbity in face of the same circumstances, "If there's anything I despise, it's an American who lives abroad and then comes home praising the Europeans!"

"Yet," the culprit meekly answered, "you know many English do exactly that same thing. They live awhile in America and then return home bragging might and main of the superiority of everything American over everything European."

"Of course! shows their sense!" answered compatriot.

"Our American girls just lick all creation! You can't deny that almost every one that goes over there marries some Pope, or Emperor, or something!" asserted Miss Dean.

It was remarked that in Europe the ladies of a family do not usually follow their dead to the grave.

"What a hideous, depraved state of society!" groaned the squire.

When the squire groaned thus, Carpenter Brown was of our company,—Carpenter Brown, four days a widower, now swaying himself comfortably to and fro in a large rocker while we breakfasted.

"You was awful kind in my wife's sickness an' in layin' out the corpse," he said to our hostess, impressively laying a deeply-weeded tall hat against the Sunday splendor of deeply-blue waistcoat and violently ruddy necktie. "I'd like to show how grateful I am, so I've come to ask if you an' the gal will go to the circus with me to-night."

"What tarnel fools some folks is!" continued Carpenter Brown. "I told Jones somethin' about my diseased wife, an' he wanted to know what disease she'd got."

"By blank!" roared the squire, "don't the blank-blanked old plug know that a 'diseased' is a deader?"

Our loudest talker, our showiest dresser, our most lavishly be-banged, is the "gal," whose visiting-cards are decorated with pigmented sunflowers and inscribed "Miss Genoa Dean," but who is more familiarly known in her own twenty-miles-away native woods as "swearing Gin." Her familiar conversation is quite Carlylese,—that is, Jane not Thomas Carlylese, and her "devil-take-its!" "hang its!" "Great Gods!" and many vastly stronger expressions are eminently worthy of the "your much-bedevelled Jane" of the "Memorials." She is, however, hard-working and honest, is always stupendously perfumed with camphor, "to squash the smell o' the cow," sleeps in gloves, and does our housework, including barn chores, for two dollars a week.

"Ain't that your feller a-comin', Gin?" asks her mistress, peering through the window-vines.

"Lord! ef it jest *ain't*!" screams Miss Dean, stampeding up-stairs to her bedroom. A moment later she reappears, a hand-glass in one hand, in the other a sponge dripping Bloom of Youth. One eye follows her beautifying in the mirror, the other watches her "feller."

The question adjusts itself thus: Which will arrive first, complexion or feller?

Madame sighs a little, with the knowledge that this beautifying costs half a week's wages the bottle. She remembers certain other domestic servants over the seas, called *La Petite Fadette* and *Marie of La Mare au Diable*, and she wonders if it really be true that there is no poetry in our own conglomerate race, and that in the blending together in us of all races every instinct and every intuition of ideal beauty has been bred out of our primitive social strata.

Miss Dean whistles about her work like a trooper, and the frail pine mansion trembles beneath her tread as were she an army with

banners. Sometimes she addresses her employer as "Jim," sometimes as "You darned old fool!" To her mistress she sweetly remarks, "Do jest hold your yawp. You've got more chin 'n's healthy."

Begged to pass anything at table, this vivid demoiselle graciously pitches it at the beggar at once, whereas squire and squires never fail to serve themselves from circulating bowl or plate before helping it on its way.

Mademoiselle is missing, and horrible wailing uproar proceeds from her room. Our hostess prepares the six-o'clock supper of hot hashed meat, doughnuts, cookies, cheese, pickles, jelly-roll, stewed blackberries, and bitter, herb-like tea, that astringent horror of American rustic tables.

"Gin's gone in for a good old howl," she explains. "Her feller came up to-day from Logger's Holler with the schoolmarm, 'n' Gin's jealous."

"What gumps women are!" sneers our squire. "In such a case as that a man would jest resort to retallatation and vindicativeness."

At our dining-room door, opening directly outward and downward upon a stubbly mountain-side, call all the travelling peddlers who infest the region,—the itinerant dyer, who takes away sewn carpet-rags and faded overcoats and gowns, the farmer who brings vegetables, and sits in his wagon bawling "Suze" or "Gin" till mistress or maid acts the vassal or serf at his call, the swashbuckler of a veterinary surgeon, the eternal book-agent, and the ambulant coiffeur, who "swaps hair" and strews the countryside with grotesquely old-fashioned chignons.

If we chance to be at meals, each and all are invited to "sit by." The dyer brings his wife, a typical woman of the region, worn and faded from hard work, sallow, flat-breasted, sharp-featured, strident-voiced, her thin hair tightly drawn away from her face into a poverty-stricken knot behind.

"She's got a disease of the hide," explains the dyer, "'n's got to loaf a bit, so I take her about with me. She's alwuz been middlin' white to me, so I try to be pretty white to her."

Like all our guests, our dyer "peels" for dinner. "Couldn't swaller my rations with a cõt [coat] on," he half apologized to Madame. "Pass the cow, marm."

Meekly she passed "the cow,"—*anglicé*, milk-jug; as meekly also she "shoved the grease" when her neighbor wanted butter.

In her husband's absence, she who has been always "middlin' white" describes to us how she trained her lord in the way dyers' wives' lords ought to go:

"When we wuz fust married we lived on a farm, in a one-room log

cabin. When the fust spring come, I told Jim I wa'n't goin' to hev no more fires in the chimbley, but wuz goin' to do my cookin' outerr doorr. 'All right,' sez Jim, 'but I'm a-goin' to hev a firre long's the evenin's holds cold.' I sez nothin', but that mornin' I swep' out the firreplace, filled it with greens, 'n' done my cookin' outerr doorr. Jim sed nothin' till night; then he commenced to cuss 'round coz he wuz cold. I sed nothin' till he commenced to pull my boughs outerrr the chimbley. I wuz hoppin' mad, but I hel' my hosses nuff to tell him ef he didn't jest dry up *someboddy* 'd get licked! He kep' on, so I jest pitched interr him, hammerrrr 'n' tongs! I knowed he wouldn't dare tetch me, coz Miss Mills had jest sworn salt 'n' batterrr onto her husband an' he'd had to pay a big fine. Jim tried to hole my hands; but he wuz alwuz a gret, soft, lazy bummerrrr, slow's 'lasses in winter, jest like he is now, so I jest gut all 'round him, and banged him a dozen times afore he could hollerrrr twice. I tell *you*, I jest wolopped him pretty! I jest bunged up one eye so he couldn't have seen an oil-well afire. Sence then he's alwuz ben as meek as Moses."

This lady is very strongly Protestant.

"Be you Cath'lic, marm?" she asks, gazing as at a single-legged calf or a double-headed goose. "Be you Cath'lic? Well, I'll say *this* for you—you don't look it!"

Rag carpets, often unconsciously æsthetic in low-toned harmonies of tertiary tints, cover our floors. Scarcely a house has not its parlor-organ, to the unskilled accompaniment of which untrained voices wake discordant but much-admired sound. The bourgeoisly-pretentious and yet rustic elegance of our house-furnishing, our showily-embroidered table-covers and lambrequins, our crochet mantel—"falls," our much-betided cane-seated chairs and rockers, our scriptural mottoes wrought upon perforated cardboard and elaborately framed, our gorgeous chromos, our snowy bed- and table-linen, our plentiful silver, and the reckless profusion and waste of execrably-cooked food, would seem luxury of Arabian Nights to the rustic shopkeepers and *petits cultivateurs* among whom we should have been born had we been born Europeans and not Americans.

Our hostess is a farmer's daughter of twenty-one, step-mother of her husband's boys. She was "raised" amidst her present surroundings, and was "tached" by her husband's first wife, now divorced and keeping a boarding-house a few miles away down the mountains among the zinc-mines. Like too many American women, our hostess has also had a varied matrimonial experience, and at twenty was divorced from the husband she married at sixteen, to whom she now invariably alludes as "that skunk!"

She plays her own accompaniment upon her parlor-organ, and squalls vociferously, mostly "Lorena," to her own slam-bang anvil-and-hammer accompaniment. Like almost all American women of her class and kind, she has boundless ambition for "fixing up" her house, and delights in fancy-work. Her work-basket overflows with silks and wools, and shows that the last dying wave of æstheticism, of Botticelli and Filippo Lippi dead-leaf tints, spends itself upon these backwoods shores.

The sunny windows are aflame with vigorously-blooming house-plants, hanging baskets dash cascades of foliage from every coigne of vantage, canaries twitter and carol among the lavish greeneth. Yet all this borrowing from nature's beauty seems to come from no love of nature, no idyllic sentiment, but simply from the social instinct of "fixing up" and having a home as decoratively fine as our neighbors.

Our hostess does not care enough for flowers to have a garden, although with ground-space enough and to spare, and contemptuously throws away the bouquets of exquisite wild flowers gathered by her city guests, as "litter" and "rubbige," and laughs in her sleeve at those city guests as "gawks" when they stand entranced before these glorious, even awfully glorious, American sunsets.

Between parlor-organ, sewing-machine, the rattle of the cook-stove, the dragon-like tread of both mistress and maid, and snatches of Salvation Army hymns, in which maid and mistress unite over the wash-tub and the ironing-table, the house has little of the blessing of silence.

All around are the eternal hills, crowned by solemn pines and wrapped about in transparent but myriad-hued films, as if in a visible garment of eloquent silence. Far down in a distant cup of the hills, white marble gleaming in the hot, still sunshine reveals the eternal silence which enfolds all the clamors and confusions of lives perhaps once as boisterous as these under our own roof. Outside our doors no sound breaks the sweet mountain stillness save the hum of insect life,—that life so vastly more abundant in America than in Europe,—the song of birds, and the faint, soft echo of some woodman's axe away off in the idealizing distance.

Thus all the uproar, the sound and fury of the universe seem concentrated within our thin pea-green pine walls, and the lover of quietness and nature's dulcet murmur shudders with the consciousness that in almost every one of the far-apart houses of the village something of the same coarse tumult prevails, for such is the nature of the American backwooder, male and female.

Doubtless God might have made more boisterous women than of

the American young and middle-aged rural kind, but doubtless God never did.

Drums and cymbals, locomotive-whistles and bagpipes, in shrieking concert, are mere bagatelles of sound compared with that proceeding from our open door when a few of us, in pasteboard sun-bonnets and working-aprons, drop in upon our hostess to borrow a drawin' o' tea or return a raisin' o' yeast.

It is impossible to detect one single touch or shade of poetic sentiment or ideal aspiration in us. Life seems to hold nothing better for us than that we may eat well, live in houses more "fixed up" than our neighbors', and finally enter into the kingdom of riches.

"Mrs. Smith is an old potater-bug! Don't you be gump enough to return her call," Madame was advised. And when Madame asked how the lady made her potato-bughood manifest, "Why, she tells all 'round that she's livin' in a mean barn of a house, only fit for pigs; 'n' *we* lived in that house for five years! As if *we'd* live in a barn!" And the accompanying snort was indescribable.

There is little time and opportunity for those who hew civilization out from virgin forests to listen to the dreamy music floating ever to sensitive spiritual ears from mystic regions, with exquisite, baffling hints, and the subtle intoxication of an existence of which this is but the black shadow. We are all either those who have laid axe and fire to the forest, or those who grew up amid the hewing: hence it is scarcely to be wondered at that life seems to us more of a struggle than a dream, or, as Corinne says, "*un combat, pas un hymne.*" We have no eye or feeling for the exquisite virginal nature that surrounds us, and once, when attention was called to the frost-tinged forest, countless bushes whence Jehovah might have spoken to his prophets, countless trees dripping liquid gold, "Lorrr, yes! it *is* ratherrr han'sum; but, I de-clarrre, I neverrr noticed it beforrrre," we answered.

Few of us ever read anything save the domestic columns of the newspapers, and now and then one of the Rev. E. P. Roe's novels. Our squire, however, lingers over a volume of Byron, and inquisitive Madame asks him why.

"'Cause he's *blank* against churches, and priests, and all that blank-blank-blanked rubbige, they say," answers the squire, with tired, puzzled air.

Some of us are "religious," but Madame sees not our superiority in that respect (and finds us much less picturesque) over the bead-telling and votive-offering European peasantry. We are Dominicans rather than Franciscans, and our works are not of gifts and penances, but of church suppers, sociables, picnics, and occasional violent revivals, while

we of the bastard-Gothic "Methodists" hold scant respect for us of the illegitimate-Gothic "Baptists." Yet even to the most indifferent of us no shadow of doubt concerning evangelical church doctrines ever comes to our feminine minds. Those minds are too little illumined to reflect shadows of any kind, and we "believe," vaguely and unconsciously, merely because we know not how to doubt, leaving the "blanking" of churches and priests to our more reckless lords and masters.

One may well wonder if we ever think at all; for our mouths are ever open, in chatter, laughter, or song. One wonders what glimmers of thought even sorrow and loss bring to us, for beneath the rod we shut not our mouths, we weep as vociferously as we sing, and we chatter even our lamentations.

Also have we primitive ideas of certain principles which have much to do with the dignity of human existence and the welding together of human society.

"Ain't Madame Blank *mean* to keep her journal in French?" naïvely complained our squiress to a sun-bonneted group. "I b'l'ave she jest does it o' purpose, coz I've got a key to her writin'-case."

This remark suggests a subtile distinction of ethics. Madame Blank would not steal the contents of her neighbor's private papers, but Mrs. Suze would. But then, again, Mrs. Suze would never dream of robbing a vague general public of a loosely-lying cup beside a remote wayside stream, while Madame Blank's Europeanized conscience and fingers itched——

Our host is the son of a butcher, and learned the shoemaker's trade. As he frequently declares, he has but one ambition in life,—to become a rich man. Finding the shoemaking way but slow to fortune, with true American pluck, ambition, and energy he earned, saved, and borrowed money enough to read law during some months in a lawyer's office. Without the least taste for study, with such mind as he has too crude to be either logical or analytical, yet ambitious enough to move mountains if ambition would do it, he has a tremendous "gift of the gab," and can talk a jury blue, if blue he means it to be, while many a cleverer man is merely gathering his resources together. A year ago he was chosen justice of the peace, having given up the practice of his "profession" because of a nervous affection influencing his power of speech and brought on by excessive drinking. He is a teetotaler now, a school-commissioner, and the master of flourishing tan-works, with an income of perhaps twelve hundred a year.

He loves his children in a semi-human, semi-bestial way, and addresses his boys as "red-head whelps," his three-year-old daughter as "Miss Squint-Eye," his wife by many a more brutal title.

When, descending somewhat tardily to breakfast, Madame finds everybody at table, he politely assures her, "We're a-waitin' for you, you see, hog-fashion!"

Nasal is his voice, coarse his speech beyond compare. Yet, like the vast majority of our countrymen in his walk of life, his honesty is perfect, and his charity turns no beggar or tramp from his door. He quarrels violently with all his neighbors, curses them as sincerely as Jane Carlyle did her husband's shirts, chuckles when their cows choke with potatoes, dines gleefully upon their black hen the day after they are suspected of having dined upon his white one, and laughs dramatically when their other hens blow away in fierce cyclones, leaving not a feather behind. He is ready to "fight any man" who wishes fighting rather than peace, and brags of having "killed his man" in remote ante-bellum days. Those he killed during the war he considers professionally, not pugnaciously killed, hence no bragging-matter.

Once Madame drove with him through a wild country where the high spring buggy sped over boulders and fallen tree-trunks as lightly as heavy European carriages over perfect European roads. By a roadside stream they stopped to drink from a cup, not of silver, but of excellent imitation, and so elegantly wrought as to be ornamental enough for any backwoods table. It lay loosely in the running stream: one could have carried it away as easily as a flower. Were this Europe and not America, it would have remained there only till the wayfarer came by: indeed, as it was, had there been nobody there to see—

"Surely that cup will be stolen before night," exclaimed Madame. Our squire looked widely at her with clear, blue, honest eyes.

"It's been there ever since I've known the spring," he said. "We've got some powerful mean cusses in these diggin's, but I'll be blanked if I believe there's one mean enough to steal a drinking-cup."

Our squire comes home from "The Works," bringing the beefsteak for dinner, as well as the string-beans, not yet matured in our own stump-pervaded and shaded garden. A pair of mud-stiffened, malodorous boots hang over his arm, just from the cobbler's. For convenience' sake, these boots serve as market-basket, and in them our coming dinner reeks of long-worn cowhide.

His raiment is rough, but his moustache has the style of that of an officer of Guards, and his profile is pure Greek. He reads the local newspapers assiduously, and reflects vividly their vital faith that America can lick all creation and more too. He studies political questions with interest, but ever with the Republican beam in his eye, avows himself blank against Free Trade, and was active and orational during the last Presidential campaign.

His boys read the same newspapers and hear the same discussions, but with more flexible and quicker if not deeper intelligence than his. Two of them already talk of college and the bar, while the third has as yet only ambition to drive a butcher's cart. By and by he will take his crass ignorance, his colossal bumptiousness, his burlesque English, to Europe, as we all do when *nouveau riche*. There he will care nothing for art-galleries, libraries, museums, castles, cathedrals, ruins. But he will gasp at the squalor and meanness of English low life and rage at the beggary and impositions of the Continent. He will kick furiously against the vail system, and will make "cussory" remarks on Europe and Europeans and bumptious ones on America wherever he goes. Then all who see him will say, "Behold the typical American!"—whereas he is typical of nothing in the world save the ease with which the low-born American rises from his original condition, if rising it be.

It took no long residence in our lofty valley to teach the exile more than one new thing concerning her countrymen.

For instance, she had lived many years in America and many away from it, never having seen, to her knowledge, a tobacco-chewer in all her life; more than that, for years she had gone to and fro in Europe declaring tobacco-chewing almost unknown in our native land and its pretended frequency a slander of transatlantic tourists.

The second day in our mountain eyrie we walked see-sawing planks before a piazzaded hotel.

"How wet this sidewalk is!" she exclaimed. "Has it been raining?"

"*Comme tu es naïve!*" laughed he. "Don't you know that if our country expects to rate more it must expectorate less?"

We looked in at the pea-green skating-rink, and there saw a huge placard,—

"GENTLEMEN will not SPIT on the floor!"

Doubtless to European eyes this would seem pre-eminently American, as indeed it did to Madame's.

Nevertheless, over the *bénitier* in St. Germain l'Auxerrois, in Paris, all the world may read,—

"*N'oubliez-pas que celle-ci est la Maison de Dieu! Ne crachez pas sur le pavé! Crachez dans votre mouchoir.*"

Some malicious reader may insinuate that this *affiche* is chiefly intended for touring Americans of the status of our squire. Not at all. Our squire never carries a *mouchoir*.

One day was spent in the court-house. It was court week, and streets and piazzas were filled with long, sallow faces, sunburnt goatees, and slouch hats picturesque with backwoods unconventionality and

quaintness. The session-room was light and airy, handsomely finished with beautiful native woods. Inside the carved and polished bar was the usual entourage of the law,—judges, jury, lawyers, criers, clerks, witnesses, and accused; the bench rose high up above our heads, and behind its carved and velvet-upholstered desk was a rocking-chair, in which the judge swayed monotonously to and fro. His honor's bourgeois garb was somewhat seedy, but he himself was, if not of dignified presence, at least of meditative, intellectual countenance, a fine type of our countrymen, intelligent, legally well read, of unimpeachable integrity, but of merely common-school education.

Below, lawyers moved restlessly to and fro. Legal feet were posed high upon green-baized tables; and, looking up to note how his honor tolerated such *sans gêne* in his presence, lo! the honorable boot-soles in full view!

Several members of the bar chewed unlighted cigars; nine-tenths of the jaws worked like rotary engines; the rank efflorescence of "cuspidores" was more than tropical.

Lawyer O'Flannagan was addressing the jury,—twelve tanned and tired peasants, with evidently as much idea of right and justice disassociated from prejudice and passion as of the differential calculus. Illiterate and narrow-minded though they were, there was yet a certain ferret-like alertness of expression, lacking to their kind across the sea.

The English boor may be not less intelligent, but he certainly is more stolid, running more to tissues and less to nerves.

Said Mr. O'Flannagan (and his words were faithfully taken down on the spot),—

"Gentlemen of the jury, if there's a spark of manliness in your bosoms he knows that a man ain't got no sort of right to lick his wife, no matter *what* she's done. It's the duty of this court to force harmony into the congenial relation. A man ain't got no sorter right to come home and kick down the stove-pipe and lick his wife, like this man done, coz she's the weaker vessel and can't lick back, and every gentleman of the jury with a spark of manliness," etc., etc.

Mr. O'Flannagan gained his case, the opposing counsel being a quiet man who used irreproachable English and debated points of law and evidence, instead of firing off sparks of manliness and trying to inflame bosoms.

Mr. O'Flannagan is the son of Irish peasants, and by the fluid conditions of our democratic society is enabled to rise from bog-trotting to a large legal practice with three thousand dollars a year. He never saw the inside of a law-school, but his sons, who drop the *O* and pronounce their name *Flanagan*, are entered in one of the best in the

country, and, so far as finite eye can see, there is no reason why Paddy Flannagan's grandson may not be Chief Justice, or even President, of these United States.

Chez nous il n'y a rien d'impossible.

M. B. Upham.

THE COMRADES.

"OH, whither, whither, rider toward the west?"
 "And whither, whither, rider toward the east?"

"I rede we ride upon the same high quest,
 Whereon who enters may not be released :

"To seek the Cup whose form none ever saw,—
 A nobler form than e'er was shapen yet,
 Though million million cups without a flaw,
 Afire with gems, on princes' boards are set ;

"To seek the Wine whereof none ever had
 One draught, though many a generous wine flows free,—
 The spiritual blood that shall make glad
 The hearts of mighty men that are to be."

"But shall one find it, brother ? Where I ride,
 Men mock and stare, who never had the dream.
 Yet hope within my breast has never died."
 "Nor ever died in mine that trembling gleam."

"Eastward, I deem : the sun and all good things
 Are born to bless us of the Orient old."
 "Westward, I deem : an untried ocean sings
 Against that coast, 'New shores await the bold.'"

"God speed or thee or me, so coming men
 But have the Cup !" "God speed !" —Not once before
 Their eyes had met, nor ever met again,
 Yet were they loving comrades evermore.

Helen Gray Cone.

A BACHELOR'S BLUNDER.

CHAPTER V.

THE DOCTOR INTERVENES.

"COME," said Mr. Lefroy, persuasively; "I think we might arrive at a compromise if we tried. You say that your life is your own to dispose of, and that you wish to devote it to the service of Art. As a fact, your life is not altogether at your own disposal just yet; but we will waive that. Let it be agreed that henceforth the chief aim and object of your existence is to be the painting and selling of pictures. So be it, and I shall be delighted to help you in any possible way: only, allowing you to live all by yourself in London lodgings is not a possible way."

It was on a misty October day that Mr. Lefroy, in the course of an interview with his niece, thus delivered himself. He was sitting in his study, which had once been his brother's study and was still full of his brother's books and odds and ends. He was sorry to be obliged to receive Hope there; but what could he do? He must have a den of some kind, and he could not shut the room up. Nevertheless, the influence of the place caused him to listen very patiently to what the girl had to say, and prevented him from meeting her request with a blunt refusal.

"You yourself must see," he continued, "that it would never do for us to turn you adrift like a friendless orphan; but you can have the best masters, and attend classes, or Schools of Art, or anything that you like, while we are in town; that is to say, from early in March till the middle or end of July. Have you any objection to make to that proposal?"

"Only that it would altogether defeat my object," answered Hope, smiling. "I want to be a professional artist, not an amateur; and I want something else, too, but I am afraid you won't like my saying so, Uncle Montague: I want to be independent."

"My dear child, you might as well say that you want to be Queen of Great Britain and Ireland, Empress of India, and Defender of the Faith. Not that you would be independent then. Great as the charms of independence are, very few of us—certainly very few young ladies—are permitted to enjoy them. Let us take comfort from the thought that perhaps it wouldn't be good for us if we were."

"I should not wish to be independent if papa were living, or if I

were your daughter," Hope said. "I think you understand what I mean."

"I decline to understand. My position towards you is that of a father; I regard you as being, for all practical purposes, one of my daughters; and I can only say to you, as I should to Alice or Gertrude in a similar case, that your demand is outrageous."

"That is hardly fair, Uncle Montague," returned Hope, her color rising slightly. "I did not expect you to be pleased at my wishing to leave Helston; I know it must seem ungrateful, though I am not really ungrateful; but I can't see that I am asking for anything outrageous."

"Very well, I withdraw 'outrageous.' Nowadays I find that I can never open my lips in the House without being called upon to withdraw something: so that the sensation is not new to me. I will substitute 'amazing.' You can't object to 'amazing:' it is a term which may be applied to the noblest forms of ambition. My dear Hope, your ambition may be a noble one and a creditable one,—far be it from me to assert the contrary,—but it has the fatal defect of being impracticable. Girls of your age can't go off and set up house by themselves: that sort of thing isn't done."

"Yet, if I had been an heiress, it might have been done."

"Really, I don't think so. You would have been my ward, in any case, until you were of age, and I could hardly have consented to your living apart from us. However, we need not consider what might have been. Come, Hope; give up this extravagant project,—well, well, I withdraw 'extravagant,' the project can go without an adjective, since it is to be thrown overboard,—give up thinking about it, and, as I said before, I'll do the best I can for you. I'll speak to your aunt."

"Couldn't we speak to her now, Uncle Montague?"

"Heaven forbid! Do you wish to see Lady Jane stretched upon the floor in a fit? What I meant was that I would speak to her about your taking lessons in London."

But Hope, who had been tentatively sounding her aunt for some time past and had been surprised at the amicable spirit in which her hints had been taken, was less apprehensive than Mr. Lefroy; and at that moment, as luck would have it, Lady Jane herself walked into the room, bringing with her some letters as to which she wished to consult her husband. Hope at once opened the attack all along the line, without any preliminary skirmishing.

"Aunt Jane, do you see any harm in my going up to London to study painting? I should live with Mills, who would take the greatest possible care of me, and I know Mr. Tristram would put me in the way

of learning what people who adopt Art as a profession ought to learn. I *must* do something, and I *may* learn to be an artist: I feel that I shall never learn to be anything else."

Mr. Lefroy closed his eyes and waited for the storm to burst. He opened them again to their fullest extent at the first sound of his wife's voice, and fixed them upon her face, which, to his profound astonishment, was wreathed in smiles.

Lady Jane was shaking her head gently. "My dear child," said she, "you are far too sensible to have ever imagined that such a thing as this could be possible, and you need not tell me who put it into your head. It is Dick Herbert all over. Dick is a dear, good fellow; but you should beware of taking him too literally. He has defied conventionality all his life, and of course there is no reason why he shouldn't, if he chooses; but it is too bad of him to have given you the idea that you could do the same. However, he has most likely forgotten all about it by this time."

"It was not Mr. Herbert's idea, it was my own," replied Hope; "and it is quite the same thing to me whether he remembers or forgets it. Why should you say that I am defying conventionality? It is only as if I were going to school; and you would not mind my doing that if I were a year or two younger. Oh, Aunt Jane," she continued, laying her hand upon her aunt's arm and speaking with a little quiver in her voice, "please let me go! I can't stay here. You are all very kind; but—but—oh, don't you see that I *can't* stay?"

Lady Jane did not see it at all, and did not like the tone that her niece was taking up. "My dear," she answered, drawing away her arm, while the smile faded from her face, "you really must try to be more reasonable. Ask me for something that I can give you, and I shall be only too glad to make you happy; but you can't expect me to countenance this extravagant scheme."

"We don't withdraw 'extravagant' this time," murmured Mr. Lefroy; but his interruption was not heeded. Hope went on pleading, at first humbly, then passionately, then tearfully; but Lady Jane kept her temper and maintained her authority, and the end of it was that her niece had to withdraw from the field vanquished.

The girl's disappointment was very bitter. She had set her heart upon getting her own way, and experience had not taught her that those who get their own way in this world do so more commonly by circuitous than by direct means. The worst of it was that, upon reflection, she could not help seeing how much more plausible her aunt's case was than her own. She was to be allowed to take lessons during five months of the year, if she was so minded; all that was denied to her

was independence; and, as a matter of abstract theory, a girl of nineteen certainly should not wish to be independent. "I must wait until I am twenty-one, that is all," she said to herself; and the prospect was not a smiling one. To go on living as a stranger in her old home,—how could she endure it? A hundred little daily rubs and worries, which, for being quite inevitable in her position, were not the less galling, recurred to her mind, and she could no longer make light of them. She had nothing to set against them now, nothing to look forward to, for who can look two whole years ahead? Hope's disposition was naturally sweet and sanguine; she was determined not to sulk because she had been thwarted, and she tried to go about with as cheerful a face as usual. But in private she brooded and fretted until at last she made herself so ill that the doctor had to be called in.

The doctor was a cheery, good-humored little man who had known Miss Lefroy from the day of her birth. A very few questions and answers sufficed to show him what was the matter, and on being led into the library by Lady Jane he asked whether he might be permitted to suggest a moral prescription.

"Please suggest anything that you like," answered Lady Jane, resignedly. "I know what you are going to say: the poor girl is not happy. But how can I help it?"

"Oh," said the doctor, "I think you can help it. Do you know, Lady Jane, I was once summoned to attend a little boy in a humble rank of life who was consumed with anxiety to go to sea. He was not fit for it; he hadn't the constitution for it, and he had never been accustomed to being cuffed. He was the only son of his parents, who naturally couldn't endure the thought of his being flogged with a rope's end and possibly drowned. They reasoned with him, they scolded him, I am not sure that they didn't even give him a gentle whipping; but it was all no good. The boy literally pined away, and at last they got frightened and sent for me. I had a good deal of difficulty in prevailing upon them to let him do as he wished, but I succeeded in the end, and when a year was up he returned from his first and last voyage radically cured. He is now a respectable carpenter in a good way of business, and when he takes his wife and family for a day's holiday he goes anywhere rather than to the sea-side."

"That is all very well," said Lady Jane; "but suppose he had liked a seafaring life?"

"In that case I presume that he would have made a good sailor; and there are worse people than good sailors in this world. I am not competent to give an opinion as to whether Miss Hope will ever become an artist or not, but I don't hesitate to say that there is nothing like a

personal trial of the realities of life for dispelling visions and making young ladies and carpenters' apprentices contented with their respective lots."

Lady Jane stroked her chin with her eye-glasses. "Perhaps," she said, meditatively, "there may be something in that. For my own part, all I wish is to do what is right; and, if we do decide to follow your advice, I shall feel easier about asking down a few friends whom Mr. Lefroy wishes to have here for the covert-shooting, and whom we really ought to ask. While dear Hope is in the house I quite dread inviting anybody; because, although she says nothing, I can see that it is painful to her. On the other hand, if we send her away, people are sure to say that we want to get rid of her. Still, if you, as her medical attendant, are quite convinced that she ought to go to London——"

"I have not a doubt of it," replied the doctor, with a perfectly grave face and a twinkle in the corner of his eye. "It is true that your niece is at present free from organic disease, but I dare say you are aware that in every human body there is a predisposition towards one form of ailment or another, and Miss Hope's low, nervous condition is especially favorable to the development of—er—active mischief. In short, if she is vexed or crossed, I will not be answerable for the consequences."

"That," observed Lady Jane, with a sigh of resignation, "is conclusive. Health should be the first consideration, and, since you order Hope to London, I must not venture to disobey you."

Thus Hope obtained her freedom after all; not because she had asked for it, or because it was good for her, or because anybody really thought it desirable, but because young Lord Middleborough had paid a good deal of attention to Alice during the past season, because Lord Middleborough liked pheasant-shooting, because it was impossible to ask him to Helston without inviting a party to meet him, and finally because "the doctor ordered it" is, or ought to be, a sufficient answer to any ill-natured persons who might accuse a fond aunt of turning her niece out of doors. Let us hasten to add, in justice to Lady Jane, that she was quite unconscious of this string of motives; and, indeed, if we once begin prying either into our own or into other people's motives, we are likely to waste much time and gain little satisfaction. Hope did nothing of the kind. She was too much pleased with the result to care whether its causes were simple or complex, and the very same evening she wrote to Mills to ask for the accommodation that she required.

By return of post Mills expressed in glowing language her pride at having been selected to take charge of her young mistress, her delight at the thought of the meeting which was now so near, and her fears lest a first floor in Henrietta Street, Cavendish Square, should seem terribly

restricted in point of size and mean in point of furniture by comparison with the space and magnificence of Helston Abbey. She further intimated her surprise that the family should have decided to send Miss Hope to lodgings, seeing that the house in Eaton Square was standing empty, and that a few servants could very well have been spared "to make you comfortable, the same as your poor, dear papa would have wished." She added, however, that it was not for her to complain of the arrangement that had been made. "And if your own flesh and blood don't know your value, my dear, your old nurse does. So please tell her ladyship, with my respectful duty, that you will be took as much care of here as if you was at home."

Evidently Mills was one of those ill-conditioned persons, mentioned by Lady Jane, who would be sure to accuse Hope's relations of wishing to get rid of her. It did not, therefore, seem advisable to show her ladyship the whole of Mills's letter, although the above message was duly delivered and graciously received.

Lady Jane, indeed, appeared determined to be gracious. During the last week of her stay at Helston, Hope was troubled with no more remonstrances, and only had to listen to a good many homilies touching the conduct which it would behoove her to adopt in London. She might, of course, call upon such of her friends as happened to be in town; but it would be better that she should not do so too frequently, and on no account whatever was she to form fresh acquaintances. It was taken for granted that her absence would only be temporary and that she would be back before the end of the year, which impression she wisely did not attempt to correct. "I will certainly be with you at Christmas," she said, not adding that she proposed to allow herself no more than a fortnight's holiday at that time.

Nevertheless, she was unable to avoid a dispute with her uncle about money, her intention being to live upon the two hundred and fifty pounds a year provided for her, which Mr. Lefroy declared to be preposterous and impossible. Her knowledge of the subject was so limited that she was easily put to silence, and in the end had to accept, with a mental reservation, the additional sum stated to be absolutely necessary for her support during the next three months.

"I wish there was no such thing as money in the world!" she exclaimed, impatiently, at last; and perhaps there was some truth in the remark made by Mr. Lefroy to his wife as they stood watching the carriage which bore Hope away to the station:

"My dear, I am quite ready to admit that you are generally right, while I am generally wrong; but to all rules there are exceptions, and I can't help thinking that you have made a little mistake in allowing

that girl to get her head up. I shouldn't be surprised if she broke clean away from you, after this."

But Lady Jane said, "Montague, you do not understand girls. She will come back in a very different frame of mind, and before this time next year she will be married to Dick Herbert."

"Will she, indeed? When that event comes off I shall be more than ever convinced that you are a very superior woman."

"I hope you will. In the mean time, be thankful that you can now ask as many men as you wish down to shoot your pheasants."

Whereupon Mr. Lefroy, who knew very well that the men who would be asked to shoot his pheasants would not be men of his choosing, smiled, and returned to his study.

CHAPTER VI.

TRISTRAM, R.A.

THERE are more quiet houses in London than is, perhaps, generally supposed; and probably there would be more still if the majority of people did not secretly enjoy the din of which they so often complain. Such houses must, however, of course, be situated in a *cul-de-sac*, and this is apt to make them as dreary to those who like looking out of the window as they are delightful to persons of a studious turn or nervous temperament. The noise of the traffic comes to them from afar in a subdued, continuous roar, like the breaking of the sea upon a shingly beach; organ-grinders and costermongers shun them; often they have gardens attached to them,—somewhat grimy ones, it is true, still gardens; and the owner of one of these is to be seen by his neighbors on most summer evenings, pacing up and down, his pipe in his mouth, his soft felt hat on the back of his head, and his hands in the pockets of his shabby shooting-coat, until the darkness hides him.

The neighbors, peering inquisitively down at this tall, solitary figure, are wont to wonder what he is thinking about, and no doubt their inability to satisfy their curiosity saves them from disappointment; for, like the rest of the world, Wilfrid Tristram, R.A., frequently thinks about nothing worth mentioning. Yet, being, as he unquestionably is, a man of great and original genius, it is only natural that he should be an object of interest to those who dwell around him. He is famous, he is odd, and he is reported to be wealthy. His house, which was built from his own designs about ten years ago, and which stands in a short street not far from Rutland Gate, is as original as its master and by no

means as shabby as his coat. Constructed by an artist for an artist, it would be unfit for any other occupant, and unless Tristram leaves it to an artist at his death it will have to be pulled down. It possesses an entrance-hall of noble dimensions, a vast and admirably-lighted studio, a good-sized dining-room, a small smoking-room, and no drawing-room at all. There is said to be accommodation for one or two visitors upstairs; but, as Tristram never has a visitor to stay with him, this is space thrown away.

Friends, however, he has, and plenty of them. It is probably for their sake that he keeps an excellent cook, he himself being utterly indifferent as to what he eats and drinks. His dinner-parties, which occur on an average twice a week during the season, and to which only men are invited, are popular. There is no formality about them; a large proportion of those who attend them have achieved distinction in some way; they are enlivened by a good deal of merriment, and the company seldom separates until the night is far advanced. The host, when in the humor, can be as gay as the youngest of his guests, and will even indulge in a little horse-play upon occasion; but it is doubtful whether he does not prefer his own society to that of anybody else. There are men who, by nature, or by the force of circumstances, are doomed to be always alone, and such men are probably never more alone than when they are surrounded by companions. Tristram's history—or, if not his history, some approximate version of it which did as well—was known to his friends, and was considered by them to explain some of his peculiarities. Many years back, his wife, to whom he was said to have been passionately attached, had left him for the sake of a good-looking young fool, by whom she, in her turn, had been speedily deserted; and this was held to account for Tristram's dislike of women and for the roughness of his manner towards them, as to which many anecdotes were current.

"If you want to see my pictures," he said once, knitting his shaggy brows and glaring at a great lady who had sailed into his studio, "you can go to the private view at the Academy; if you want to buy them, you can communicate with me by letter; but if you only want to talk, I must ask you to repeat your visit some day when there is no light and when I can't work."

Yet there were a few ladies—the heroine of this story, among others—whom he did not hate. He admitted that good women, though rare, were to be met with occasionally; good men he believed to be, upon the whole (and if you did not fix your standard too high), more common than bad ones. What he could not and would not admit was the existence of a single capable art-critic. For many years the critics had

ignored or laughed at him; they had caused him an amount of suffering which would have astonished them very much had they known of it, and he was quite unable to forgive them now that they lauded him to the skies. It was against the critics that Hope used to hear him thundering in the days when her father used to take her to Tristram's studio. He would not even have their praise, which he averred to be as stupid as their blame. One of them, and one only, had had the luck to win a good word from him by declaring that it was "impossible to judge Mr. Tristram's works by any of the received canons of Art."

"Here," cried Tristram, when he read the above passage, "is a fellow who deserves to be better employed! He has found out that there are forest-trees which his little arms can't span nor his puny strength cut down, and in a moment of honesty he actually says so! There is hope for that man." And he incontinently asked the critic to dinner, but was disappointed with him on closer acquaintance, finding him less humble than might have been anticipated.

Humility was a virtue which Tristram felt to be more becoming in others than in himself. He could not help knowing that he was a great man; it was a pity that he could not help the littlenesses from which even great men are not always exempt. Confident in his own genius, but so sensitive to a breath of censure that the reading of the newspapers at certain seasons of the year was a daily penance to him, he made himself miserable over attacks at which other artists would have been content to smile, and it was always in the power of the merest criticaster to goad him into a fury.

However, not many people attacked him after his reputation was once made; and it must be said for him that his wrath, even against the critics, did not go beyond words. Had one of them been reduced to poverty and come to beg for his assistance, it is certain that five pounds would have found their way out of Tristram's pocket into his before he had been narrating his woes for five minutes. Persons in need of five pounds, and of greater as well as less sums, frequently visited Tristram, got what they wanted, and, as the lamentable practice of such persons is, returned a second and a third time. "The greatest painter of the century," as they were too apt to denominate him in their gratitude, opened his hands to them without stint and without putting many questions. He had known what it was to be poor and hungry, and had no desire that others should experience those sad sensations, if he could help it. True, he had never begged,—would probably have starved rather than beg,—but that was because he happened to respect himself. He did not expect everybody to possess

self-respect, or demand too much of poor human nature. Half child, half philosopher, he scattered abroad the money of which he now had far more than he required, only too glad that it should be picked up by those who cared more about it than he did.

One November morning he was in his studio, dashing off a study for a picture which afterwards became celebrated,—the sale of the Roman Empire by the Prætorians to Didius Julianus,—when some one was announced whose business was not of that simple kind which is disposed of by the careless gift of a handful of guineas. Tristram, who had not seen Hope since her father's death, and who was far from suspecting what had brought her to his house, dropped his brushes and hurried towards the door to meet her.

"Ah, my dear Miss Hope!" he exclaimed, taking both her hands, "I don't know whether I am most glad to see you or sad to see you alone. Your dear father was a kind friend to me: I think he was kind to everybody. Only he was always so quiet in his ways that perhaps we none of us knew how much we cared for him till we heard that he was gone."

Tristram was not a reticent man. It would never have occurred to him to pass over his old friend's death without allusion, or to express his sympathy with the orphan by silence and mournful looks, which is the more common method. He may have been wanting in delicacy; but Hope, at any rate, did not think so. His simple words went straight to her heart and brought the tears into her eyes.

"You really knew him," she said. "There are so few people who did."

So they sat down together and talked about bygone days, and Hope was able to speak more freely of her loss than she had as yet spoken to any one. "But I ought not to interrupt you like this," she said, at last.

"You don't interrupt me," answered Tristram, "or, rather, I like being interrupted. But I can go on with my work, if it will make you more comfortable." And he picked up his pallet and brushes again. "What are you doing in London? Are your uncle and aunt up?" he asked, presently.

"No," answered Hope: "I am living by myself,—at least, I am living with an old nurse of mine,—and I called to-day to have a serious consultation with you. You know that I have lost all my money?"

"Yes, I heard. It made me very sorry."

"You ought not to be sorry," returned Hope, smiling. "Do you remember once saying to me that it was a thousand pities that I was not obliged to earn my own living?"

Tristram stopped painting and looked at her, drawing his brows together.

"Did I say that?" he asked.

"Yes; and the last time I saw you—at that ball, you know—you told me that I ought to be thankful for having a pursuit to fall back upon."

"That I do remember; and I stick to what I said. Well?"

"Well, now I have fallen back upon my pursuit and I have to work for my living, and I want you to advise me as to the best and quickest way of doing so."

When Tristram was annoyed or perplexed he had a habit of combing his beard violently with his long fingers. He began combing his beard now. "Am I to understand that you are dependent upon your own exertions?" he asked.

"Not exactly that, because I have a small income still. I should have thought it would have been enough for me to live upon, but they tell me it isn't; and, anyhow, I should prefer its being larger."

"But I heard that your uncle—that you were to continue to live at Helston."

"Yes; but I couldn't. I know everybody would say that it was 'the proper arrangement,' and I know everybody will be horrified at my wanting to be an artist and lead an independent life; but you are not like everybody. I thought you would understand."

"Oh, I understand well enough," answered Tristram, who was walking about the room and was still causing himself much unnecessary pain by dragging hairs out of his beard; "I understand as well as anybody what the charms of freedom are; but then, my dear Miss Hope, I am a great big man, and I have always had to look after myself, while you are a young lady who has been brought up in cotton-wool."

"A woman may be an artist," said Hope.

"Oh, certainly: there is Rosa Bonheur, and there was Angelica Kaufmann."

"There have been plenty of others. Please don't talk to me as if I were a silly child. I don't aspire to be famous; but surely there is no great presumption in thinking that I may learn to paint pictures which some people will buy. Look at the rubbish that they do buy!"

"Would you be content to paint rubbish? I grant you that rubbish sells more readily than anything else; but even that popular article requires to be signed by a well-known name."

"Everything must have a beginning."

"Oh, excuse me; there are many things which had much better

not be begun." He paused abruptly in his walk and planted himself in front of his visitor, with his hand upon his hips. "Look here, Miss Hope," said he: "did you come to ask me for advice?"

"No," answered Hope, boldly, "I didn't; because my mind is made up. I came to ask you for information and help."

"Come," said Tristram, with a laugh, "I am glad you take up that line: it relieves me from responsibility. And now, if you will promise not to tell anybody, I'll let you into a secret: I believe that if I had been in your place I should have done exactly what you are doing."

Hope's face, which had grown rather grave, lighted up with smiles. "Oh, thank you!" she exclaimed, gratefully.

"Ah, but that doesn't alter the fact that you are doing a foolish thing. Now, how am I to help you? Do you want me to introduce you to the picture-dealers?"

"Of course I don't: how could you think such a thing of me? I want you to recommend a course of study to me. I am utterly ignorant about masters, and schools, and so on. The only master I know of is old Mr. Bluett, whom papa used to have down to Helston to give me lessons."

"And who taught you long ago all that he has it in him to teach."

"I dare say he did. Where ought I to go now, then?"

Tristram took a few more turns without replying, and then said, suddenly, "You had better come here, I think."

"Here?" repeated Hope, doubting whether she had heard rightly.

"Yes, I think so: it isn't as if you were quite a beginner. If you were, I should hesitate to undertake you, for I have very little patience and no experience as a teacher; but, as it is, I believe I can push you on more rapidly than you could be pushed on in a School of Art. No doubt you would learn something there; but the process is a slow one, and my object is——"

"But, Mr. Tristram," interrupted Hope, "I must not take up your time in that way. It is very good and kind of you to think of it; but I could not accept so much."

"I never met such an obstinate young lady as you are: you won't accept anything from anybody! Do you suppose I am going to let you interfere with my work, pray? What you are to do is to watch me in the first place, and to work in a corner by yourself in the second. Every now and then I shall take a look at you and tell you where you are going wrong. What I was saying when you interrupted me was that my object is to be able to let you know as soon as possible whether there is any use in your persevering. Mind you, it isn't worth your while to paint what you call rubbish. You sacrifice a great deal in

taking up Art as a profession. You lose sight of your friends, you drop out of society, you are called eccentric, and you miss opportunities which—which—in short, you leave your own class. If you have any chance of making a name for yourself, well and good. But you must not pay such a long price merely for the satisfaction of pocketing twenty or thirty guineas occasionally."

"You forget the freedom," remarked Hope, smiling.

"Oh, freedom!—that's a relative term. After all, what do you want with freedom?—and who is really free to do as he likes? Certainly you are not. Why, you can't even come here to study under a graybeard like me, unless you bring some sort of an old woman with you. I have an aged housekeeper somewhere about the establishment who might do. Or could you get your ex-nurse to look after you?"

"I will ask her," answered Hope, to whom this aspect of the case had not yet presented itself, and who began to realize the difficulties of independent existence. "But I am not sure that she can spare the time."

Mills, however, when informed of the service required of her, declared that all her time was at her young mistress's disposal, and that her first-floor lodgers must not expect to have their landlady at their beck and call from morning till night. It was bad enough, she said, that they should be on the first floor at all, while their betters were sent up to poky little rooms over their heads; but if they began to give themselves airs, why, the sooner they moved elsewhere the better.

As they had never given themselves airs, this was a little hard upon them; but Mills was not pleased with what she considered Hope's escapade, and, being vexed at things generally, had to find a scapegoat somewhere.

CHAPTER VII

THE OPINIONS OF MRS. MILLS.

INJUSTICE and misconception are rife in this world, and very good people often judge other good people with conspicuous lack of charity. It is even pretended by some that good people are more prone to err in this way than bad ones; but let that pass. Certain it is that at this time the worthy and faithful Mills formed an exceedingly low opinion of Mr. Montague Lefroy. Miss Hope, poor dear, might think it a fine thing to try and earn her own daily bread; it was natural that she should think so, bless her innocence! But what would her poor papa have said if he could have seen her tramping through the streets in all

weathers on her way to the house of a common artist, who was not over and above civil to her when she got there, and didn't seem to know his proper place at all? And as for that old uncle of hers, who was living in what ought to have been her home, and who should have known a great deal better than to permit such goings-on, Mills became so angry when she thought of his behavior that she was more than once driven to exclaim "Drat him!" aloud. However, she only did this in the solitude of her own room. Mills knew her place, if Mr. Tristram did not know his. She might have her own notions of what was right as betwixt relations, of what was due from the younger branch of a family to the elder, likewise of what was commonly decent; but far be it from her to utter them! She was well aware that it was not for her to make remarks about her superiors, and, that there might be no mistake as to her submissive attitude, she took care to say as much to Hope every morning of her life.

But neither with her lips nor in her heart did she murmur at the task imposed upon her of spending many a weary hour in the studio of the common artist above mentioned. She did not like it; she would have preferred to be keeping an eye upon her servants at home; but, on the other hand, she was proud of acting as Miss Hope's protector, and, having an unfailing supply of socks and stockings to darn, argued philosophically that she might almost as well be darning them in one place as in another.

Tristram, who was a good deal amused by her determined silence and by the grim impassiveness of her demeanor, found her, one day, gazing at a picture which he had just finished, and asked her what she thought of it.

"If you please, sir, I'm no judge," the old woman said.

"That is a very poor reason to give for not pronouncing a judgment. Come, let us hear your opinion."

"Well, sir, if I'm to say what I think," replied Mills, who perhaps was not sorry to say what she thought, "I prefer Miss Hope's pictures to yours."

"It would be a very good thing for Miss Hope if half a dozen people whom I could name agreed with you and had the courage to say so. Personally, I feel bound to give myself the preference. I think, if you will make a careful comparison, you will see that I have a rather bolder style."

"Maybe you have, sir, but it's too splashy for my taste," responded Mills, briefly.

"Mrs. Mills," said Tristram, "you ought to have been an art-critic. You have laid your finger upon my chief defect, and I dare say it

will astonish you to hear that that is the very thing for which I am most admired. Let me tell you, however, that there is no other artist in England who could make such splashes as those."

In this he spoke the simple truth, and he might have added that there was no artist in England less fitted to instruct a beginner. Tristram's method was his own, and could hardly be reduced to any set of rules for the guidance of others. Yet he took great pains with his pupil, and, though he could not impart to her the secret of his marvellous dexterity, of the assured sweep of his brush, and of his rapidity of workmanship, he did teach her something.

"Correctness," he told her, "is all very well, but it is not Art. What you want to do is to throw your soul into your work and to force people to see with your eyes. Unhappily, that is not easy."

Hope, who had never expected to find it easy, was not discouraged by the very small meed of praise which rewarded her exertions. Tristram would stand, with his hands behind his back, silently contemplating what she had done, and, when asked to point out faults, would reply that there were none to speak of. "You haven't got it yet, that's all," he would say, turning away. He did not explain what he meant by "it;" but Hope understood well enough.

On one occasion she was privileged to overhear an independent opinion of her performances. As visitors often dropped in during the day, and as Tristram did not think it desirable that they should be aware of Miss Lefroy's presence, he had made Hope set up her easel in a small room adjoining the studio, the door of which he usually slammed at the first sound of approaching footsteps. One day, however, he happened to push it to without quite closing it, and thus Hope was enabled to hear a voice (which, if she had known it, belonged to a celebrated painter) expressing unbounded admiration of "The Sale of the Roman Empire." Tristram responded somewhat gruffly,—it has already been said that he was a man whom it was difficult to praise to his satisfaction,—and after a time his friend, desisting from eulogy, began to walk about the studio, apparently examining one thing and another.

"This is fine, Tristram," Hope heard him say presently; "but it isn't altogether *you*, somehow. I never knew you work up your details so elaborately before."

"Glad you like it," replied Tristram: "it's by a friend of mine, a rising young artist, and you can buy it cheap, if you choose."

"Really?" said the other, who was well-to-do, and who sometimes purchased the works of rising artists, sometimes also disposing of them at a legitimate profit when the said artists had risen. "What does he want for it?"

"Oh, fifty guineas now. Next year it may be a different story; but we mustn't be too greedy at starting."

The stranger laughed. "I don't think I'll buy it," he said. "If I might offer your young friend a word of advice, it would be to make the most he can of his own powers and not try to imitate the inimitable. He has ruined his picture by putting in those bold touches, which he no doubt takes for a reproduction of your style. I was almost taken in for a moment; but a little closer inspection reveals the sham. Don't let the poor young man attempt that kind of thing again: it isn't to be done. There is only one Tristram in the world."

"But there are a great many asses," returned the ungrateful Tristram. "Every one of those bold touches that you mention was put in by this unworthy hand. Where are you now, my good friend?"

"It appears to me that I am in the house of a man who has been trying to palm off a fraud upon me," replied the other, good-humoredly. "Isn't it rather doubtful morality to get a young friend to paint a picture, touch it up yourself, and then ask fifty guineas for it?"

"That's right! grumble now! Why, man, have you no sense of shame? For that paltry sum I offer you a work which you yourself pronounced very fine so long as you thought that it was by me. When you found that it was neither by me nor by anybody else whom you had ever heard of, you began to sneer at it; and finally, when you are told that I added a stroke to it here and there, you talk about doubtful morality! Good Lord! what a world of ignorance and humbug we live in! Blindfold a man, and it is as much as he can do to distinguish between port and claret; give him a bottle of your best Château-Margaux after dinner, and he will go into ecstasies over it,—only if you tell him it is Médoc he will call it sour. Doubtful morality, indeed! And what sort of morality do you call it, pray, to praise what you don't really like and run down what you are afraid to own that you admire? Of all kinds of dishonesty, I do think dishonest criticism is the most contemptible, because it is so perfectly safe. Hang me if I believe that such a thing as an honest critic exists!"

He was still fuming after his friend had gone away, and when Hope, emerging from her ambush, confessed that she had been playing the eavesdropper.

"Well," said he, "I am not sorry that you should have heard what you did. It will show you what Art is as a profession, and the dog's life that we are made to lead sometimes for years. By fools, too: that's the worst of it. The man who has just gone away does at least know something about his trade, and, if he can be so blinded by prejudice as to talk the nonsense that he did a few minutes ago, what can you

expect from a fellow who only writes for the newspapers and probably couldn't paint a cow that anybody would know from a pig, except by the horns?"

"But he did think the picture good at first," observed Hope, alluding to the artist, not to the critic.

"Did he? Goodness knows what he thought: evidently he himself didn't. He said it was 'fine.' It isn't fine: he could hardly have said anything more absurd. And he couldn't recognize my touch, either, when he saw it. Ah, well, in future, when I want a candid judgment on my work, I shall apply to Mrs. Mills. Yours is an uncorrupted mind, Mrs. Mills: you don't deceive either yourself or others."

"I trust not, sir," replied Mills. "And, if you please, Miss Hope, it's past one o'clock."

Hope, as she walked away, was by no means so displeased with her unknown critic as Tristram had been. Secretly she was inclined to agree with him that the picture had been spoiled by those bold touches which she had not added to it. Tristram had spoken of fifty guineas, too, and had said that next year the price might be higher. That sounded promising. She had not altogether realized the meaning of his friend's laugh, and she was already beginning to realize the value of fifty guineas. That is a lesson quickly learned by such as attempt to live upon two hundred and fifty pounds a year, and Hope was resolved that her annual expenditure should not exceed that modest figure. She had gone into the matter in a thoroughly business-like spirit, and after setting aside fifty pounds a year for dress (for she could not conceive that any human being could be decently clothed upon less) had found that her rent and household bills averaged four pounds a week. Fifty-two multiplied by four gave two hundred and eight, or an annual deficit of eight pounds,—which was a pity; but by spending a few weeks at Helston during the summer some further retrenchment would doubtless be achieved. Obviously, however, the budget could not be framed so as to include any estimate for cab-hire; and thus Miss Lefroy, accompanied by Mills, had to walk across Hyde Park twice every day.

Hyde Park on a damp November afternoon is not the gayest place in the world, nor are its footpaths always found pleasant walking by those foolish pedestrians who will insist upon wearing patent-leather boots in London, no matter what the season of the year may be. But when one has the credit of one's battalion to keep up in the matter of dress one must not mind small discomforts, and the dapper young gentleman who stepped out of the mist to meet Hope and her protectress as they hurried homeward had turned up his trousers and was picking his way along as cheerfully as could be expected under the muddy circumstances.

But when he recognized the figure in deep mourning before him his cheerfulness increased into joy; he pitched away his cigarette, took off his hat, and exclaimed, "Good gracious! Miss Lefroy—how delighted I am! I didn't know you were in London."

Hope bowed, coloring slightly and for the first time in her life feeling shy; and the young man added, with a rather crestfallen air, "You have forgotten all about me, I see. If there is a thing that fills me with grief and humiliation, it is having to tell people who I am; but there's no help for it, evidently, this time. My name is Cunningham. Now, don't say you never heard it before."

There was not much danger of her saying that; nor had she ever forgotten the fascinating partner with whom she had once spent a happy evening and against whom she had been warned on the following day. Only he seemed to her to belong to some previous state of existence; his name was written in a concluded chapter; the change in her circumstances, she thought, had opened an impassable gulf between her and the world to which she belonged by birth; and this—or some other reason which she did not specify to herself—made her feel embarrassed: so that she could find nothing to say, except, "Oh, I remember you quite well, Captain Cunningham."

"Are you going to be any time in London?" he asked. "Where are you staying? May I call upon you?"

"Well, no; I am afraid you can't do that," answered Hope, recovering her self-possession, "because I am living all by myself."

Then, as he looked much astonished, she explained: "That is, I am living with my old nurse. I don't know whether—perhaps you have heard of my—my—misfortunes."

The young man, assuming a decently lugubrious expression of countenance, replied that he had, adding something about "awfully sorry,—very shocking,"—and so lapsing into unintelligible murmurings.

"I am studying Art," Hope continued. "I hope to be able to support myself in that way some day or other."

She was moving on now, and Cunningham was walking beside her, Mills having dropped into the background.

"Support yourself?" repeated the young man, in a tone of astonishment amounting almost to stupefaction. "I—I—never heard of such a thing!"

"It is my own choice," said Hope, smiling at his consternation and guessing what his thoughts were. "My uncle and aunt wanted me to stay on with them at Helston; but I did not wish to do that. I felt that I must earn my own living. Don't you understand?" she asked,

with a touch of impatience; for the young fellow was staring at her in undisguised surprise.

"Oh, yes," he answered, slowly, "I understand; only I don't sympathize. It is the sort of thing that you would be sure to do, and I admire you for it,—all the more because it is the sort of thing that I should be sure *not* to do."

"Would you not rather feel that you were living by the work of your own hands than upon an allowance made you by an uncle?"

"I shouldn't advise any uncle of mine to offer me an allowance unless he meant his offer to be jumped at. No, Miss Lefroy: it is my fixed principle never to do anything for myself so long as I can get somebody else to do it for me."

After making this scandalous confession, of which he did not appear to be in the least ashamed, Captain Cunningham walked on in silence for a few seconds. "I should like awfully to see your pictures," he remarked, presently. "Couldn't I manage to get a look at them somehow?"

"Not just at present," answered Hope, sedately. "When I have painted a sufficient number, I shall exhibit them in a gallery in Bond Street, and you will be admitted, with the rest of the public, upon payment of a shilling. But it seems possible that you may have to wait a year or two."

"And am I to wait a year or two before I see you again?"

This was a question to which Hope was not prepared to give a reply; but it struck her all of a sudden that the present interview had lasted long enough: so she came to a stand-still, and said, "I don't know. At any rate, I will not take you farther out of your way now."

Captain Cunningham looked very unwilling to accept his dismissal.

"Of course, if you tell me to go, I must go," he said, throwing a reproachful expression into those dark-blue eyes of his; "but, Miss Lefroy, do you never go anywhere where—where—your friends are likely to meet you?"

"Never."

"I suppose you go home sometimes,—to your uncle's, I mean?"

"Oh, yes: I shall be going down there at Christmas."

"Come, that's better!" cried the young man, cheerfully. "I'll get them to ask me down too." And, after shaking hands with somewhat unnecessary warmth, he departed.

As soon as he was out of hearing, Mills, whose face was bright with pleasure and excitement, and who during the above colloquy had found time to construct a complete romance, exclaimed, "My dear, what a beautiful young gentleman!"

Hope laughed. "He is a nice sort of boy," she said: "I don't think he is particularly beautiful."

Nevertheless, she did think so, and indeed could hardly have thought anything else. Also she had a suspicion that he admired her very much; and his admiration was not altogether disagreeable to her. Is there any woman living to whom the admiration of a beautiful young gentleman would be disagreeable? Hope was very far from setting possibilities before herself in the uncompromising fashion adopted by Mills; but more than once in the course of the next few days she found herself wondering when and where she would next meet Captain Cunningham, and by what means he proposed to get himself invited to Helston Abbey.

It was not by such mere details that Captain Cunningham was likely to be baffled. His acquaintance with Mr. Lefroy and Lady Jane was only a slight one, it was true; but, if he did not know them very well, he knew numbers of people with whom they were intimate, and his experience had taught him that an invitation to a country house may easily be obtained in many ways by a resolute man. He had, however, a conscience,—which conscience told him that he ought not to seek for this particular invitation. The fact that he had fallen profoundly in love with Hope Lefroy (he had been profoundly in love once or twice before) did not, he felt, justify him in pursuing her. He had no money worth mentioning, and it appeared that she was now in the same undesirable predicament. Conscience, therefore,—or was it prudence, perhaps?—waved him imperatively away from her. In this strait he followed the dictates of his nature and confided his trouble to a certain lady friend of his, whose advice was prompt and unhesitating.

"You will please not to make a fool of yourself," this worldly-wise lady said; "and, as I can't trust you out of my sight, I will take very good care that you spend your Christmas with us."

It is thus that worldly-wise ladies often succeed in preparing the way for all kinds of catastrophes.

CHAPTER VIII.

MR. HERBERT ON MARRIAGE.

MAN is born to labor and sorrow, as the sparks fly upward. The majority of us have so many serious troubles and anxieties that we accept the minor miseries of suppressed gout, unpaid bills, tedious acquaintances, corns, and the like, as incidental to our mortal lot, and

have neither time nor disposition to grumble at them. But when a man has everything in the world to make him happy—when he is healthy and wealthy, and has a modest conviction that he is also wise, when his eldest daughter is about to be married to an altogether unexceptionable viscount, when his yearly bills are all made beautiful by receipt-stamps, and when he has not so much as a corn to complain of.—it is but natural that he should resent very deeply any trifling worry that may intrude upon his bliss and think it hard that he should be afflicted with a wrong-headed niece.

This is why Mr. Lefroy, after welcoming Hope back to Helston with appropriate Christmas greetings, hastened to promote the merriment of the season by adding, emphatically, "And now I do trust that we have heard the last of this nonsense!"

Hope wished to know what nonsense.

"Why, this picture-painting and starving in frowzy London lodgings."

"Indeed they are not frowzy," said Hope.

"Very well, they are not frowzy; but they are lodgings, and you starved in them. Don't say you didn't, because I know better. You have actually paid back to my bankers the wretched little sum I gave you before you left us. Now, I must say I think that is rather too bad!"

"Please don't be angry, Uncle Montague: it is only that I do want to live upon my own resources, if I can."

"My dear, I am not the least angry; but I am bothered, and I can't for the life of me see why you should wish to bother me in this way. Do you think it is pleasant to be asked by every single person who comes to the house what my niece is doing, and to be obliged to reply, 'Oh, she is up in London, trying to keep body and soul together by painting pictures'? I put it to you as a sensible girl: *do* you think it is pleasant?"

"Is that the answer that you make, Uncle Montague?"

"No; but it's what they understand. And then they say, 'Poor girl!' and look pensive. You must admit that this is a little trying to a well-meaning uncle who only asks to be allowed to do his duty."

"There is a well-meaning niece in the case who wants to be allowed to do hers," observed Hope.

She was not going to give in; but she perceived that there were breakers ahead, and it was fortunate for her that her aunt and cousins were just now fully occupied with Alice's engagement and approaching marriage to Lord Middleborough. The bride-elect, to whose lot had fallen the rare privilege of pleasing her family and consulting her own

inclinations at one and the same time, was in an excusable condition of glee, and could hardly be expected to interest herself much at such a moment in her cousin's artistic career, which, indeed, neither she nor her sister had ever taken quite seriously. When, in the midst of a grave discussion as to the colors to be worn by the bridesmaids at the coming nuptials, Alice interrupted herself to remark, "Of course you will come with us to London in February, Hope?" and when Hope replied that she intended to return to London long before the date mentioned, both the girls laughed, assuring her that she could not do such a thing as that. The doctor having prescribed a total change of surroundings for her, there had been a reason to give for her leaving Helston in the autumn; but she was well again now, and it would never do for her to be living in Henrietta Street while her relations were in Eaton Square. People would think it so odd.

"Does it matter what people think?" Hope asked.

To which absurd question her cousins replied, wonderingly, "Of course it does, dear: it's the one thing that *does* matter."

The proposition was to them so self-evident that they were unable to understand how so talented a girl as Hope could fail to grasp it; while she, on her side, found it simply incredible that any human being should shape the course of his or her life in submission to the prejudices of a few careless gossips. The best plan was to say no more about it; and, luckily, there were many other subjects to be talked about.

A considerable number of visitors were already in the house, and more were expected. Lord Middleborough, an amiable, unremarkable young man, with large possessions, arrived on Christmas Eve, as did also various members of the Lefroy clan, who had been wont to consider Helston a dullish house in bygone days, and who appeared to be pleased with the new *régime*. But there was one person who did not come, and Hope could not help wondering why he didn't. She mentioned casually to Gertrude that she had met Captain Cunningham one day in London, and asked whether they had heard anything of him lately. The reply that she received was not wholly satisfactory to her.

"Oh, no," Gertrude answered: "we never hear of him when we are in the country, except sometimes from Dick Herbert, who is rather a friend of his. People said at one time that he was going to marry Dick's sister, who is an heiress. Captain Cunningham is the kind of man who is sure to marry an heiress some day; but I suppose he will put it off as long as he can."

"Things are made very hard for the poor heiresses," Hope remarked. "I am glad I am not one any longer."

"Things are much more often made hard for those who are not heiresses," rejoined Gertrude; and there seemed to be something to be said in support of that view.

But Hope trusted that things were not going to be made hard for her just yet. Her uncle, after his first little querulous outburst, left her in peace; and her aunt, as she fondly imagined, was too busy with her guests and future son-in-law to think about anybody or anything else. Lady Jane, however, was quite capable of thinking about a good many things simultaneously. She had received a hint from her husband, and was by no means so indifferent as she appeared to be.

"Well," she said rather sharply to the doctor, who was invited to dinner on Christmas-day, "your prescription has had no effect."

"Really, my dear lady," replied the man of medicine, blandly, "I don't think you ought to say that. Miss Lefroy is looking quite well and strong again."

"I don't speak of her bodily health. She is not cured of her complaint; and you promised that she should be."

"Oh, pardon me, I made no promises. And, if you remember, a year was the period of absence which was found successful in the case that I cited to you."

"It is utterly and absolutely impossible for me to send my niece away for a year," returned Lady Jane, pettishly.

"Then neither my prescription nor I must be blamed if the patient has a relapse. Seriously, I don't see how you can have expected her to become discouraged so soon. A month or two at sea may be enough to cure a lad of wishing to be a sailor; but a month or two in comfortable quarters in London is hardly enough to cure a young lady of aspiring to be an artist. You should have given her time to fail."

"But I am not sure that she would have failed. Besides, a girl's time is really too valuable to be wasted in that way. No; I am much obliged to you, but I shall try another prescription now."

The doctor smiled. He guessed what the prescription would be, and was not concerned to dispute its efficacy. Doubtless it would be better for the poor girl to marry than to fail or succeed in her effort to support herself. The only question was whether she would consent to accept a husband of her aunt's choosing.

Lady Jane wrote out her prescription and sent it off the very next morning. It ran as follows:

"MY DEAR DICK,—I wish you would run down here for a few days. I say a few days, because I am afraid you will not be persuaded to remain longer; but I need not tell you how pleased we shall be if

you care to stay on. You can hunt three times a week easily from here, and Mr. Lefroy wishes me to add that he has stabling for as many horses as you like to bring. Hope is with us now, and that is one reason why I want you to come: because you seem better able than any one else to amuse her and draw away her thoughts from her father's death, which she has not yet got over, I fear. I took your advice and let her go up to London by herself for some time; but it was a dangerous experiment, and I don't think it has succeeded very well. Do let me have a line to say that you will come, and

"Believe me

"Always affectionately yours,

"JANE LEFROY."

In due course of time Mr. Herbert telegraphed, "All right;" and Lady Jane, who had not been quite sure that her invitation would be accepted, considered this somewhat unceremonious reply as a good omen. Perhaps it would be all right, she thought: after all, why should it not be? A glow of legitimate pride came over her as she reflected upon the triumph of capturing so confirmed a bachelor as Dick Herbert. "He certainly admired Hope very much when he was here before," she said to herself, "and I doubt whether he would come back again if he did not mean something. Oh, what a mercy it will be if he does!"

But the vexatious thing about this man was that, although he had an established character for plain dealing and practised plain speaking to an extent which bordered upon the offensive, it was not always as easy as it ought to have been to discover exactly what he meant. What, for instance, did he mean by such a speech as this?—

"I'm awfully glad that Alice is making such a good match, and I congratulate you with all my heart, you know; but at the same time I wish you hadn't asked me to come here until the business was over. It's enough to give anybody the blues to see poor Middleborough in his present deplorable condition."

This was about the only remark that he addressed to Lady Jane on the evening of his arrival; and, having made it, he walked away, feigning not to hear her when she called out to him to come back and explain himself. To Hope, however, he deigned to unfold his sentiments at somewhat greater length.

"I do think," he announced to her, "that to marry for love is about the most idiotic thing that anybody can do."

He sank down, as he spoke, upon the sofa at the end of the long drawing-room where Hope was sitting alone, her hands lying idle in her lap and her eyes fixed pensively upon the betrothed couple, who

had withdrawn into a remote corner and were pretending to play chess. She turned, with a look of surprise, to her neighbor.

"Why is it idiotic?" she asked. "I should have thought there couldn't be a better reason for marrying."

"Oh, I've no doubt you would have thought so," answered Herbert, a trifle irritably: "at your age one does think so. After one has kept one's eyes open for a considerable number of years one knows better. To begin with, it's such a one-sided business. Nearly always it is the man who is in love, and if, by any chance, it happens to be the woman, so much the worse for her."

Hope made no reply, but glanced significantly at her cousin and Lord Middleborough and smiled.

"Oh, well," resumed Herbert, "I didn't say always: I said nearly always. It may happen that both are in love; but what then? What is falling in love? It's a pleasant sort of experience, taking it altogether, and of course it becomes delightful if your love is returned, or if you fancy that it is returned. But to marry because you are in love is illogical. A man who does that is very apt to wake up some fine morning and find that he has tied himself for life to a vixen or a fool or a flirt."

"What would you have people marry for, then?" inquired Hope. "For money?"

"I have known people who have done so and haven't regretted it. At any rate, they have got all that they expected, don't you see? The great thing is to have a clear understanding before you start; and if one of you or both of you are in love that's an impossibility."

"I don't think I should care to have the future put before me in that cut-and-dried way," said Hope. "I would rather take my chance of disappointment. If any one offered to tell me now exactly what prospect I have of becoming an artist, I should stop my ears. Some day or other I must know the worst or the best; but I don't want to know yet."

"Your character seems to be the opposite of mine," remarked Herbert: "I like to face things."

By and by he asked, "What do your masters say to you?"

"I have only one master,—Mr. Tristram,—and he says very little."

"Oh! And what does your uncle say?"

"Nothing encouraging. I am afraid I shall have to fight another battle before I go back to London."

Herbert stretched out his long legs and looked at his feet. "I rather think," said he, deliberately, "that you will get beaten."

"If you do think so, it is not very kind to say so," returned Hope,

with a flash of anger in her eyes. "I have won one battle: why should I not win another?"

"Only because in your particular case it is easier to win one victory than two. Why can't you stay here till February, and then go up with the others?"

"You know why; and I did not expect you to turn against me," answered Hope, still much incensed against her former supporter.

"Yes," said Herbert, with a sigh, "I know. But all the same I am bound to confess that if I were your uncle I shouldn't let you leave Helston again. People are sure to talk. In fact, they have begun talking already."

"I thought you didn't care what people said?"

"We all care, really. We may pretend that we don't; but we do. Young Cunningham told me the other day that he had met you in Hyde Park and that you were living in lodgings somewhere all by yourself, and he wanted to know the meaning of it. I dare say he has been asking everybody."

"I don't see why there need be any mystery about the matter," answered Hope: "it isn't disgraceful." She hesitated for a moment before adding, "Do you know Captain Cunningham well?"

"Yes; about as well as one knows a man with whom one has nothing much in common. Why do you ask?"

He opened his eyes a hair's-breadth wider than usual and fixed them upon his questioner, who, to her annoyance, felt herself coloring slightly.

"I don't know," she replied. "The girls told me that he was a friend of yours, and I wondered whether it could be true. As you say, you and he are—are—not at all like one another."

"He is a very pleasant sort of a fellow," said Herbert, briefly. He looked as if he were going to add something, but apparently thought better of it, and, having already talked a great deal more than he was wont to do in one evening, relapsed into silence.

It is proverbial that silence is often eloquent, and likewise that there are persons who sometimes shine by their absence. If Captain Cunningham had desired to be as much in Miss Lefroy's thoughts as she was in his own at this time, he could not have adopted a wiser course than to deny himself a visit to Helston Abbey, nor could Fortune have served him better than by sending thither a friend of his who never spoke ill of the absent, and who, when he could not say much good of them, held his tongue.

W. E. Norris.

(To be continued.)

IN A GARRET.

IT happened only last September ; and I think you do not know her. I should not, but for my old aunt Abby ; but now I often look at her when I meet her in the street, in her faded black gown,—is it bombazine, or is it alpaca?—that is so limp and dingy and worn-out and looks like mourning tired with too many years' wearing. Happily, her face belies its frame : she has a sweet face, still pretty, and very fresh and smooth and quiet. Aunt Abby says she is far from poor : she knows her as working in some old charities, to which she gives much money. I asked about her, when I heard it, and found out more than Aunt Abby knows. Indeed, these things are not usually known ; and I think I found out more than any one knows, although this is a true story.

You see, Garden Street is not a pleasant street, and very few people know of it, and still fewer would ever go there ; and to visit in Garden Street is more than one would do for a mere acquaintance. It was not out of any want of respect for Miss Allerton, but she was so very old that her friends were mostly infirm, or dead, or they had many descendants and engrossing family cares ; and she had no relatives, or, at least, none in Boston,—at all events, none near enough to expect to come in for any of her money ; and mere acquaintances, as I have said, could not be expected to go to Garden Street to see her. Then, Miss Allerton had no nephews or great-nephews to keep her name before people, and no pretty-faced nieces to bring her on the scene as aunt to Juliet and a person for Romeos to conciliate. Then, she lived on Garden Street,—in a court off Garden Street. Now, Garden Street is bad enough, but Garden Court is worse ; for court is not a courtly name, like square or avenue. I, for one, if I die rich, expect to end my days on a boulevard at least, as names go now in the Republic.

Thus even the mere geography of the thing was enough ; for few people having due self-respect and sense of their position, social and geographical, in Backbavia would care to be found north of Cambridge Street ; and there were still fewer people left in society of social creation sufficiently remote to remember that they should continue to know Miss Allerton simply because she was Miss Allerton and her father had been Judge Allerton, who was the son of Harry Allerton, Governor of the King's Province of Massachusetts Bay. But charity covers a multitude of sins ; a lady with a subscription-paper for soup can venture even to the end of Hanover Street in a coupé ; and that is why Miss Allerton's

calls had come to be mostly associated with subscription-papers. Lady and gentlemen almoners knew that Miss Allerton was sure for twenty dollars or so, which she always paid in a roll of clean bank bills, never by a check. Indeed, it was hard to imagine her respectable name at the foot of a national bank check: doubtless it would have been dishonored. In fact, Miss Allerton was a very musty and obsolete old person indeed, —though she still went on, like an old eight-day clock that has never been subjected to modern repairs.

The first time I went down there (*I went with a subscription-paper*) the venerable lady did not come to the door, and I asked the maid-servant if she were in. The servant herself, as a door-tender, showed signs of desuetude: she made one or two throaty noises, such as a mechanical toy would make if it attempted to execute a new squeak, and said that Miss Allerton was engaged. This reply seemed as difficult to her as a repartee to an echo, and the moment she had made it her skin turned browner with the blush that mantled over the enormity of the lie she had told. For Miss Allerton at that moment was sitting in her attic, doing nothing, and it was a falsehood most preposterous to say that she was not at home.

As I have said, the house was on a court; but at least it had the court to itself. Garden Street leaves Hutchinson Street and runs down towards the water behind the jail, through what used to be the Mill-pond, a district now filled in with the scum of humanity. After you leave Cambridge Street you go between a line of houses, ordinary enough two-and-a-half-story bricks, with the door-way in an arched cell, and often a pasteboard placard in the window, "Rooms to Let, with Board." The basements are usually filled with shoemakers or grocers, and here and there an undertaker with a red ticket in the window, "Ice." By and by you see that the houses are older, by the "bind" of the bricks, laying the ends and sides of the bricks alternating, and not in our monotonous modern way. The basement windows make a display of round bundles of kindling-wood and square cakes of popped corn cemented with treacle. Even these houses have seen better days. Occasionally you may note a large arched front door with a fan-light of glass over it, or the frieze of a house moulded in little wooden squares; there is an old wooden sign of a Saracen or other painted heathen perched on a bracket above a door where a negro politician keeps a pool-room. And just before you get to a corner where there is a gin-shop and a fashionable dress-maker, you turn up to the left into Garden Court, of which the wall on one side is made by a mossy wooden building skirting a discolored bit of grass, where there is an elm and a skinned and moribund sycamore. Miss Allerton's house faces upon this bit of grass, pre-

senting to it a yellow façade with two gables, and only an edge to the street. The house would seem to have turned a cold shoulder to the street since it took to evil company. In the southernmost of the two gables is the garret in which Miss Allerton sat. There is a bedroom in the end towards the street; the gable does not run clear through the house, but stops and sinks down into a sloping roof with a dormer window in it. This is the garret window: it looks towards the river; and you can still see a rood or so of green water between the piles of the drawbridge and the Fitchburg Railway-Station.

When the servant had shut the door in my face, I went back and told my uncle (who had sent me down with the subscription-paper) that Miss Allerton was engaged. He could not have been more surprised if I had said she was engaged to be married. He wondered who took care of the old lady now; and I asked if she lived up in that neighborhood all alone; and he said that he didn't know, but supposed she was rich enough to have some poor relation with her. I did not ask him then who she was, because I knew that Aunt Abby would be more likely to know; and, indeed, I was desirous of getting up-town, for I wished to get my ride that evening, and also had to go to a dinner-party.

I rode home along the quay, just before sunset; but there was no knowing the exact time, for the autumn mist was on the river, which might have been a sea for any sign that was visible of an opposite coast. A rod from the shore the smooth olive water faded to gray, and soon vanished, with no horizon-line, only the hull of a distant ship shadowed in. It was depressing; but the prospect of dinner and bright dresses was before me, and I rode the faster as the mist began to ravel out and a cold dash of rain came from the east. I even enjoyed the scene,—it was such a delicious contrast to an evening of gayety,—and I stopped a moment, when nearly home, to look again at the river, now ruffled by the wind that brought the rain. The same dash of rain pattered down on the roof of Miss Allerton's garret, and she sighed and turned her eyes back from the window to the littered floor and the dusty boxes. She had been doing nothing all the afternoon, and it was now nearly five.

It was almost as unusual for Miss Allerton to be idle as it was for her to be depressed: she had lived before boredom was discovered, and was too unfashionable to have learned it since. And, although Miss Allerton was somewhat sad at heart, sitting to-day in the garret, she was not at all a querulous old lady. So far was she from being unhappy that she had sat there and forgotten to leave the place, more in wonder at her mood than because of it. She was used to taking this world cheerfully, as having a heaven-sent meaning in it. She had not felt sorrow for so

many years : perhaps that was the reason of it. It had been rainy for a week, and her old servant had talked of leaving her, and one of her poor families had been found without sobriety. Not that there was very much in all this, but it troubled her a little ; and then she had gone up into the garret at one, just after dinner, and had opened an old trunk to get some old dress to give away, and the idle fit had come on her, and she had stayed there ever since.

A pleasant face had Miss Allerton,—a very pleasant face, with the soft gray hair and the kind wrinkles near the eyes. There was a spinning-wheel near her, and a row of old painted chests ; fire-irons, a pompous old cane, silk-worked samplers, a rubber fire-bucket, an old wig, and doubtless many other family relics, were stowed away in the boxes about her. The lozenge-shaped frame of some old dowager Allerton's hatchment was leaning with its face to the wall, falling to pieces, slowly, with the inseparable air of leisure and dignity that attaches to things which have outlived their use. Miss Allerton, too, had been thinking that she had outlived her use, and she looked vacantly at an old leather bag hanging on a nail in the wall, evidently empty. The leather bag had hung there many a year, but she had never noticed it before. Then she looked out of the little dormer window, and over to the wharves, and the factories, and the rows of wooden houses, and the dirty river slipping through its grove of piles, and all the horizon of huddled houses where she remembered green meadows and wooded hills and a blue river, when her eyes were blue, not gray, nor meant for use alone.

She paused to assure herself that she was not unhappy. Surely not,—even in the garret there, looking out on the damp, dull weather : a little lonely, that was all. And she had had so many friends ! Then she remembered—what woman ever forgets?—a fair girl she had known, about the time Lafayette came to town, who was very pretty, sweetly, dearly pretty. It was odd to think this girl had been herself. There was no vanity in remembering this, for it did not seem to be herself,—rather some daughter of hers who had long been dead. Only, she had never had any children. Then, her father, the judge,—the proud old gentleman whom all the little provincial city had known and liked to honor,—there were so few people left in the town now, although it had grown so large. Somewhat too proud indeed was he, she thought, with a sigh, in the days when the crowded wooden house was a mansion with a garden that stretched back to the square old stone houses of their friends in Bowdoin Square. After all, the time might come when she would have to leave the old house, old and unfashionable as it was, for the family fortune had grown out of fashion too, and the square brick warehouses were out of date and yielded little rent now ; and she had

never had the heart to cut down her list of charities. She had thought the fortune would outlast her time; but she had lived too long. Not that she cared much for the fortune, but her friends had often told her she must move: the street was no longer respectable. After all, though, it was not so very lonely there. She liked it better than another place. But it was a dreary September day; it was the equinoctial,—there was no doubt of that; just such a day as it had been in that September in 1832 when her father, the stern old judge, had come home and told her.

Yet it was strange; it still seemed as strange as it did on that first day. It had never been explained. He surely had loved her: she had thought so on that very first day of all, when the young stranger was introduced to her at her father's friend's, at a tea-party. How near, too, she had been to giving up the tea-party that night! She had a headache from the ball the night before, and she was a proud young beauty, and there was going to be no one there but a new clerk of Mr. Oliver's, some young man who had come North from the Carolinas, or from some sugar-plantation in Barbadoes. He certainly was attracted by her that night; and he asked permission to attend her home, and her father refused it. Yes, her father had been born among the colonial aristocracy, and he was very proud.

But she had tried to make it all up, so far as she modestly could: he was not used to her father's ways, but he was a frank, ingenuous young gentleman, who had won his way with every one. Only, he had been very shy, and very much afraid of her, and very modest. It had been a twelvemonth before she had blushed when they met, so gentle had he been in his wooing, and then a year again before he dared to take her hand and look at her and leave her as he did that night of the election. And then, of course, she had supposed that he would come to see her father the next day; and every one spoke well of him by that time,—every one, even her father, the old judge. But he had never come. And the next day (or was it a week after?) her father—it was just such a day as this, with the mist, and the damp, and the wind blowing the fog—her father had come home to tea, and had told her (he had said so casually, she remembered, in the hall, as she had been helping to divest him of his surtout)—had told her that young F— was gone to the Californias. And that same old mail-bag had been hanging in the hall.

She had been angry at first, but she had long since given over being angry; and it was not long after that when the old judge died and left her with one brother. He had not done very well in the world; and he had died too. And many years after she saw in the newspaper that

Mr. F—— had died in the Californias. (She had never mentioned the name to any one in fifty years, nor shall I do so.) She had seen F—— once after the time he had looked in her eyes on that election-day,—but only in the street, and she was in her carriage, and she was a little piqued and had feigned not to see him ; and it was the day after this that her father had come home and told her, in the hall. She was wondering even then why he had not come : it was already the beginning of that long wonder that was to make a puzzle of her life,—until, indeed, she grew middle-aged and had found her work to do ; and since then she had been very happy. Only, she wished that she might have had young relations : her brother had left no children. For many years she still had thought that he would write ; but he never did. Could it be that he had never loved at all ? It was very strange.

Here again she paused a moment in her thinking and looked again across the river. It had not always been fretted with so many bridges. They used to have to drive many miles around to the old house at Lechmere's Point, just across the stream. She wondered if the house was still there : now there were many high blocks about it, where the orchards had been, and a dozen long black bridges stretched out and away, like the arms of the great city reaching for the woods and fields. She got up and walked to the window, with a rustle of her clean silk gown, and looked out for the view of country highlands. But the mist and fog were too thick. You never would have thought her seventy-odd as she stood there with her pleasant face and her bright eyes peering as a girl's might do for some arrival. Then she looked back into the garret with the mass of old things stored away,—the outworn symbols of her quiet life. There was a lack of children's toys and little chairs ; most of the things were very old, from the locks in the chests to the old leather mail-bag on the wall. It was all hers,—hers alone. Half a thousand children passed by her windows every day, noisy, unkempt children, to a school near by, and they would look up to her windows and cry out at her. People thought she was a miser and hoarded more than memories. And the neighborhood was very sad and squalid, and people said it was not even safe for her to live there. She was very old. Had he died happily, she thought ? The paper said that he had never been married. And yet he had behaved so cruelly to her. He had pleasant brown eyes, and such a brave, manly way about him ! And then how tenderly he had taken the posy from her ! Why was it that she thought of him to-day ? And she remembered thinking, years before, that she would never have to cry again.

She felt that she was doing wrong, and tried to scold herself like a child. Wiping her old eyes with a girl's light touch to the eyes and

head, she got up and went to the window again resolutely. The fog and rain were still driving from the sea. Almost in the zenith was a little break of pale-blue sky, so pure, so cold, that it seemed like a memory of heaven; and its color showed that it was after sunset. She heard a crash behind her; it was a startling sound in the still garret, but she turned and saw that it was only the old mail-bag fallen to the floor. It had hung upon its hook half a century, and at last the ribbon had broken with the weight.

Miss Allerton remembered it well,—how it had hung upon the knob of her father's door and been carried by him to his office and back on days when foreign ships came in. It was very dusty, but she stooped to pick it up, and her hand slipped in through the leathern lips and drew forth a letter. It was a letter that had never been opened. It must have stuck in a wrinkle in the bottom of the bag and lain there all these years. It was too dark in the old garret to see more than that it was folded over and sealed with a great, careless seal, without a stamp. It was evidently written before the days of stamps. She walked with it to the little window: the little square of blue sky had grown larger, and gave just light enough for her old eyes to read the address,—to her,—to Madam Sarah Allerton.

It was a boyish, trembling handwriting, but the sight of it set her heart beating as it might have done a girl's. She steadied herself on the window-sill a minute before she broke the seal. The letter ran as follows:

Sept. the 8th, 1832.

"DEAR MADAM,—If I dare to write to you to ask your leave to lay my addresses before your respected father, it is only that I feel last night that you learned my secret. I am too unworthy of you not to deem this letter presumptuous: forgive me, dear Miss Allerton, if you cannot return my love. If you smile when next we meet, I will take it that you are not angry with me, although you cannot deign to love me. For I have loved you since that day we met two years ago. But if you can neither love nor pardon me, make no answer to this note, and I shall know.

"F——.

"Dearest, I do love you so!"

Miss Allerton dropped the letter from her hands and looked outward at the sky. The rain was driving now, washing the heavens clear; and the rain came also from her eyes, and tears unwonted fell upon the dusty garret floor. But he had loved her: that was all. A last time she looked over the old river: the clear rift of blue was wider now, and

the curtain of rain swept back across the bay, from where the long gray cloud-bank rose away from the clear horizon. The autumn storm was over, and under its clear blue rim there came the winter.

But I think of late Miss Allerton has been happier and less lonely than of old. And I do assure you she is a very dear old lady, young-looking for her years.

J. S. of Dale.

A SUMMER EVENING.

IN the soft pulsing darkness here
We silent sit: my heart beats loud
With joyous sense that thou art near,
Yet dares not speak the thoughts that crowd
And fill my soul, until I seem
No more myself, but through the night,
Like the pale shadow of a dream,
To float and quiver, as the light
Faint quivers on the wall.

The dim light from street-lamps below,
That slanting strikes above thy head,
The sound of footsteps to and fro,
This summer night, unreal and dread,—
All common things strike on my heart
Like voices weird from bygone years:
In some fantastic way a part
Of my past life this night appears,
And thou the soul of it.

Thy shadowy form across the room
Seems stretching shadowy arms to me;
Our souls embrace in the soft gloom,
Not two, but one, they seem to be.
Held breathless by this night's strange power,
Which we may never feel again,
Farewell and greeting, in one hour,
We say to keenest joy and pain
Which yet is but a dream.

Margaret Edson.

THE NEED AND NATURE OF CIVIL SERVICE REFORM.

AT the request of the editor of this Magazine, I promised to answer in this number an article I had not read, which was published in the last number, under the title of "Civil Service Reform." It was contributed, as I now see, by that sprightly, kaleidoscopic, generally peppery and sarcastic, always illogical and consequently unanswerable writer who for some immaterial reason persists in using the pseudonyme *Gail Hamilton*. The sneers at the reform movement and the misconceptions of its whole spirit, which are the most striking features of the article, are as harmless, so far as well-informed people are concerned, as they are characteristic and ridiculous.

But the article has other peculiarities. It brands all the Civil Service Reformers as persons "impervious to facts," "who stuff the ears of foreigners with falsehood," as engaged in pressing a "humbug reform where none is needed," as guilty of having "maligned" General Grant, as men "who bear false witness and *know* they bear false witness," as "ungodly" men who (in the refined language of the owner of that pseudonyme) are "turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, . . . filthy dreamers, not apostles, not actors manfully doing man's work, but evoking filth in idle dreams, . . . spots in our feasts, feeding themselves with fear," as "trees whose fruit withereth," as "raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame," as "wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever," as "complainers walking after their own lusts," and other things of the same sort, or worse, in metaphors as numerous as they are wild and incompatible.

It is, I suppose, too late for me to say that such an article answers itself; but I may suggest that no one—not even a maiden—who uses such language can be allowed to hide herself behind a pseudonyme. It is one thing to allow such a shield to modest worth, but quite another to concede it to aggressive misrepresentation and reckless slander. Nevertheless, I will allow Miss Abigail Dodge a part of it, by calling her G. H.; for these letters may stand also for the Great Humbug which she declares Civil Service Reform to be, and for the Greater Humbug which all well-informed readers know her presentation of it to be.

It is now about nine years, I think, since this same amiable writer, taking a contribution of mine to the *Atlantic Monthly* for her text, in which I predicted a not remote triumph for a reform policy, poured through the columns of the *New York Tribune* as many, I believe, as from ten to fifteen long letters, under the title, as I remember it, of

"D. B. Eaton's Path of Glory in the *Atlantic Monthly*," a few of which letters I read. She thought, as many short-sighted partisans thought, the disastrous refusal of a Republican Congress in 1875 to vote the appropriation requested by President Grant for continuing the salutary enforcement of his Civil Service Rules, to be an act of supreme wisdom.

Having never taken the slightest notice of these letters, I have thought, now that I am unwarily committed to answer her last diatribe upon reform, that I ought to explain a little why I have heretofore treated her writings as unanswerable, or as needing no answer, as the reader may interpret the matter. To be understood, those letters must be regarded as being, at least in the view of G. H., a joint, grand recital of funeral rites at the grave of Civil Service Reform, and of a *Te Deum laudamus* at the apotheosis of Ben Butler and Mr. Blaine; one of whom was, according to her philosophy, thereafter to rule the political skies, which that reform was to disturb no more.

For reckless sarcasm which spared not even the saints of the land, for bursting joy at a supposed victory which the English language was too barren to utter, for ecstatic assurance which even dithyrambic verse was not competent to express, over the everlasting death of Reform and the eternal exaltation of the Spoils System, and also for hyperbolical statements, irrelevant statistics, and pretended reasoning leading to nothing, there is not to be found in the partisan literature of the time anything to be compared with these letters. In solemn mockery she chanted dirges over the political death of reformers whose fame and good works have more and more honored the land ever since. In vaunting prophecy she foretold the rising glories of partisans—blind as herself to the better sentiments of the people—who now lie hopelessly stranded in the Spoils System bog whose praises she delights to sing. Poetry and eloquence from Mother Goose to Milton, from Ben Butler to Burke, were laid under contribution to adorn her attack and to show that all reformers are fools and false prophets, if nothing worse, that the partisan chieftains and their flunkies are the glory and salvation of the land, and that the whole theory and all the methods of Civil Service Reform are chimerical and impracticable,—mere aristocratic English exotics,—hostile to our institutions and pregnant with direful calamities. Week after week she drove nails into the coffin of Reform and stamped long and hard upon its grave, as if to make a resurrection impossible.

These letters were not, however, without some practical results fit to be noted here. They have at least made it certain how far G. H. has the gift of political insight. And—what is far more important—they doubtless did as much as anything else to cause the Independents of New York to be utterly distrustful of Mr. Blaine—her sole political

saint—on the reform question, and consequently to cause his defeat there for the Presidency. Had it not been for this old distrust, sown by G. H., a member of his family, I have good reason for thinking that Mr. Blaine's positive declarations of the need of a reform policy and his pledge to sustain it, in his speech at Brooklyn, which I shall cite,—though made too late,—would have secured him the less than six hundred additional votes in the great State of New York which would have made him President.

It is not the fault, but the misfortune of G. H. that, after experience has refuted all her theories and falsified all her prophecy in favor of the Spoils System and against the Merit System, she is now compelled either to be silent or to arraign the latter on these two grounds only: first, that no reform was necessary, and, second, that the reform attempted is trivial,—contentions which no one able to gain access to a first-class magazine ever made before, and so easily refuted as to require an apology to its intelligent readers. I must therefore claim the liberty, under my promise, of going much beyond the ground she covers.

In accepting her issues I must reject her standards. They are so different from mine that our chances of reaching the same conclusions are hardly greater than those of arithmeticians who should dispute over the multiplication-table. She says, "Man is compounded of men and women;" whereas I have regarded a man or a woman having much of the qualities of the opposite sex as an abnormal and almost invariably an eccentric character. She says, "Pecuniary power is the final standard of confidence," which I admit to be true for those who respect nothing higher than money; whereas I have regarded honesty, fidelity, and upright character as the true basis of confidence. She regards "one moment" of Matthew Arnold's observations of our politics as more to be trusted than the warning of our own statesmen and Presidents for a generation, giving a fifth of her article to him, and confounding parliamentary procedure, class, church, and Irish quarrels and hates in Great Britain with our own administrative questions; whereas I regard Mr. Arnold as knowing little of our political questions, and all she says about him as irrelevant and unworthy of notice. She presents Civil Service Reform as a "nosegay," a "button-hole bouquet which droops visibly," a "posy," a "upas-bloom," a "petty detail of national housekeeping," for which not even the "rights of society" should be neglected; whereas I have regarded that reform as a great political and moral issue between the politicians and the people, between all that is partisan and selfish and all that is patriotic and disinterested in each party, between those who would stand on the Constitution and the examples of its framers and those who would prostitute Executive power

and Congressional influence for personal and partisan ends,—as an issue which, at this moment, is for each party one of the most perplexing and vital before the country,—as an issue which, so far from waning, is widening and deepening rapidly, and is sure to be one of the most important and decisive questions in the next election, as it was in the last. But I admit that too much acceptance of the G. H. view of Civil Service Reform, however petty in itself, has secured for several persons, who otherwise might have had an opportunity for great things in “national housekeeping,” abundant leisure for the “rights of society.”

After establishing the profound truth that there can be no reform unless there is something to be reformed, G. H., in a way peculiar to herself, proceeds to prove by assumption that there can be by no possibility anything but corruption—by which she means only loss by peculation of the public moneys once collected—to be reformed. G. H. next flatly declares there was no corruption. Wherefore Civil Service Reform is shown to be a Great Humbug, and the reformers, according to her inexorable logic, are demonstrated to be “spots at our feasts,” “raging waves of the sea,” “wandering stars,” and various other things equally compatible and awful, for which she reserves them for the “blackness of darkness forever,”—a very difficult thing to bring about, one would think, during the time they are wandering stars.

Now, if G. H. had been better informed as to the administrative abuses charged by the reformers, and long recognized by both parties, by Congress and by every President and Cabinet for a whole generation, she would have known that her kind of corruption has hardly been mentioned among abuses needing reform. It does not occupy a score of pages in the thousands which make up the large and growing literature of the reformers. It is hardly mentioned in the various messages of the last four Presidents, who have so earnestly set forth the need of arresting abuses. Tweed, the phenomenal production of the Spoils System, was indeed guilty of that kind of corruption. The cases of the defaulting paymasters Howgate and Burnside, and the instances of defaulting postmasters which happen so frequently, show that corruption even according to G. H. is by no means rare. It is as nothing, however, compared with the great abuses which the reformers have attacked. Cashiers, treasurers, paymasters, postmasters, and other custodians of the public money are required by law to give bonds, and bondsmen are generally able to make up losses when they occur. If G. H. had gone a little deeper into the subject, and had become aware of that general distrust which causes treasurers, postmasters, collectors, and other officers to exact extra-official bonds to themselves as the condition of appointing subordinates from whom the laws require none, she would

have got a glimpse of one phase of the vast abuses to which no intelligent person but herself, so far as I know, is blind.

So far from corruption, according to G. H., being an evil which the "wandering star" and "raging wave" reformers have made special efforts to remedy in the Civil Service Rules and examinations, the fact is that the nineteenth rule expressly excepts cashiers, superintendents of money-order divisions, all direct custodians of money, and all disbursing officers who give bonds for themselves or for whom others give bonds, even down to and including assistant tellers,—being nearly every officer who can be guilty of her kind of corruption,—from the examination altogether, for the very reason that the old precautions against speculation have been found fairly adequate. It is sad to think what an amount of space filled with hyperbolical misrepresentation and rickety slander on this subject a little more information would have saved.

The petty cheats, like those in vouchers for naval supplies and in forage-accounts by judge-advocates-general, which are now or have lately been before the courts, the frauds in the collection of revenue, the wholesale squandering of the public moneys in the matter of ship-repairs and naval contracts, and those stupendous frauds in whiskey-tax collections and fast-mail contracts, involving the loss of so many millions, by which the public conscience has been shocked and the nation has been dishonored in every quarter of the civilized world, would none of them be corruption according to G. H. ; but they are a part of those alarming abuses which spring from a partisan public service of favorites and henchmen, and of that vulgar, despotic bossism in politics, according to which not only may the salaries of the humbler servants of the nation be robbed to pay party expenses, but under which official authority of various kinds may be used for corrupt and partisan purposes, without rebuke from those in high places, provided only a liberal portion of the plunder is secured to fill the party treasury and to carry the elections for the party in power.

As G. H. confidently stakes her theory and her case on the condition of the Internal Revenue Bureau in 1881 and 1882, I will meet her there; and I affirm that its then condition was discreditable to the country, although its chief at that time, whose eulogy of it she adopts, had improved it since the days of the Whiskey Ring frauds, the infamies of which had come near overturning an administration. It was discreditable that one of the reports of the Bureau for that time advised a four years' term for its subordinates, for the express purpose of facilitating their appointment and removal on partisan grounds alone. It was still more discreditable that the same report declared that "being

honest, capable, and diligent . . . are not facts which will justify retention in office," and, further, "that the struggle at the polls is to change the policy of the government *by changing its officers*,"—bald utterances of the inmost spirit of that vicious old Jacksonian Spoils System which I must assume have the hearty approval of G. H.

Let us look into the facts disclosed by the report. The list of judgments on bonds of ex-collectors set forth in the report indicates more defalcations or frauds than had taken place in Great Britain in the twenty-five years last previous, though the British Internal Revenue collections had exceeded those of the United States by nearly one hundred millions annually.

The test of revenue administration, I hardly need say, is not the amount of money lost after collection, but property allowed to escape taxation, assessed revenue not collected, officers bribed, vast money interests and partisan combinations allowed to overawe officials and defraud the revenue.

Let us apply this test. The report tells us that in the then last year "811,466 gallons of liquors were reported as lost by leakage and evaporation"! Any one knowing the power of the whiskey and brandy interests in our politics will have a proper sense of the prodigious elasticity of the meaning of "leakage and evaporation" which could enable nearly a million gallons to escape through them in a single year.

This same report has a unique paragraph headed "*Ordnance in the Hands of Collectors*," and then follows a list of the fire-arms and other implements of destruction which constitute the Internal Revenue armory. The killing of twenty-eight persons and the wounding of sixty-four more during the past five years in Internal Revenue battles is very appropriately next reported as a part of the doings of this model service according to G. H. I believe that such an item in an Internal Revenue report, and anything approximating such an amount of arming and killing, are as absolutely unknown in the Internal Revenue administration of any other enlightened country as are the Spoils System theory and practice of appointment and removal which are in large measure the cause of such scandalous facts.

This report next tells us that in 1880 there were 7417 Internal Revenue suits or proceedings pending, of which the prodigious and disgraceful number of 6053 were *criminal*! But, worse than this, it is also stated that there were 3519 criminal suits or proceedings instituted in the single year 1881,—or more than at the rate of ten every secular day! It is safe to say, I think, that this amount of litigation and criminality is several times greater than that exhibited altogether in the same period in the three or four other foremost nations of the world,

and that it is not due to a lower morality or a less regard for law among our people, but to the distrust, hostility, and suspicion developed on the part of citizens, and to the corrupt and oppressive conduct on the part of officials, which naturally result from a system and a political theory which do not accept the facts of being "honest, capable, and diligent" as "reasons which justify retention in office," but which seek partisan manipulators for officers and subject every Internal Revenue official to arbitrary political assessments upon his salary, on the peril of removal, at the bidding of party managers, and also compel him to use his subordinates for keeping the party in power and his superiors in office, if not for getting them better offices. What more natural than that the people should see, or at least imagine, personal and corrupt enemies in such officials and hold it justifiable to cheat and resist those whom the nation has put over them in apparent connivance at such a prostitution of official authority?

But the report shows other facts hardly less significant. It declares that "frauds in the manufacture and sale . . . of tobacco have been rife;" that "bad laws and defective supervision of the vinegar trade . . . have opened the door to great frauds;" and that "investigations made the [then] last year showed large amounts of taxes due the government from banks."

After stating that large amounts have been found due upon capital brought into the United States, it further declares "that \$722,705 have been due and unpaid the United States on the part of seventy banks," in five cities which are named. The Commissioner further declares his belief that large additional sums are due from other banks, and that the investigation is still proceeding. When we remember that there were more than two thousand banks, and find that nearly three-fourths of a million has been found due from seventy of them, we can form some kind of a guess at the vast amounts in which all of them together were allowed to stand, for some inscrutable reason, indebted to the government.

Yet, for an Internal Revenue administration so defective and so condemned by litigation, crime, violence, and death, the Commissioner asks for \$5,000,000 to pay its estimated cost for the next year,—a sum from two to three times as great, I believe, as the cost of collecting the same amount of Internal Revenue in Great Britain.

Before leaving this G. H. paradise of good administration, let me say that there, as well as in every other part of the public service, the majority of the officials were, I think, and are now, worthy; but many of them were, and are now, unworthy; and I think no citizens so much lament the latter fact as the worthier portion in every large office who make

it possible to carry on the public administration and who are greatly overworked by reason of many drones and incompetent partisans. They are humiliated at seeing vicious influence and favoritism open the gates of the public service, which should yield only to merit. This better class of officials has been ready at all times to serve and has been most efficient in aiding, in the capacity of examiners and otherwise, the Civil Service Commission in carrying forward those reform methods which shut the gates of patronage-mongering and give character and capacity the power of entering the public service in their own name and by their own efforts.

G. H. quotes General Hawley to the effect that 450 of the 2207 employees in the Treasury Department have been there from *one* to five years, that 376 have held office above five years, that 281 have held office above fifteen years, and that from 18 to 20 have held office for thirty years. She gives some other similar facts of no significance. I would, in the absence of her figures, have readily conceded a more favorable showing than this for what she wishes to make out. The figures bear only on the question of the length of holding office. Curiously enough, she seems to regard this as a great merit, as an effective argument for the Spoils System. Let us not forget her position in that regard.

No great office can get along without a few persons of experience, and it will have them, however bad the general system. G. H., however, does not so much as attempt to make proof that those longest retained are generally the best, without which the mere fact of retention is pointless as an argument; and soon we shall find her proving much to the contrary. Now, in fact, the awful reformers have said almost nothing whatever, and the Civil Service Rules and laws say absolutely nothing, concerning the length of holding office. Nearly every unjustifiable removal is made not to get any particular person out, but to enable some favorite to be put in. The reformers have rested on the certainty that when mere partisan influence and official favoritism cannot fill the vacancies, few are likely to happen except for justifiable reasons, and, consequently, that the tenure of office will probably become as stable under the Merit System as the public interests require, though nothing is provided on the subject. The Civil Service Act and Rules leave the power of removal almost absolutely unaffected. The argument of G. H. is, therefore, utterly useless against those at whom it is aimed.

It hardly need be said that in any great firm or corporation conducted, not on a partisan theory, but on business principles, the average time of holding their places on the part of its employees would be found to be many times as long, in the aggregate, as is thus shown in respect

to the officials of the Treasury. Think of a great department of 2207 officials of which the most that can be said is that only 450 of them have held their places for from *one* to five years, and only 376 for more than five years! How vastly better if the average holding of all had been at least five years, as it would be in private business!

But let us not forget, what is far more important, that G. H. makes the most of her figures in trying to prove that a long holding of office is sometimes possible even under the old system, which result she presents as one of its virtues that greatly promotes the public interests. Having thus clearly condemned any system which defeats the acquiring of valuable experience, what does G. H. say of the Spoils System and politicians' theory that every officer should go out whenever a new administration comes in? What does she say of the theory of her favorite Internal Revenue Commissioner, who advised that all subordinates in his office should be given a four years' term, to facilitate the making of these places a part of the prizes to be fought for in every quadrennial election?

If an experience of more than four years is an advantage, why turn the clerical officers out or put them in for mere political reasons at all? If capacity to do the public work, and not to render partisan services as flunkies or henchmen, is the criterion for clerkships, why not have examinations which test such fitness and disregard political opinions altogether? But this way of reasoning would require competitive examinations, which are the horror of all the patronage-mongers and partisan-manipulators of the country. It may be stated here that the probabilities are that not many years hence, under the Merit System of examinations, now being enforced for all the Departments at Washington, G. H. will be able to make a much more favorable showing of the advantages that come from experience in office than is now possible; for that accession of a new party to power which under her favorite Spoils System would doubtless not have left up to this time even three or four hundred of the 2207 officials in the Treasury Department in their places, has been followed by the displacement of less than one hundred and fifty of them. Is not this a very real reform, even according to G. H.?

The ratio of displacement in the other Departments, and in the parts of the Postal and Customs service subject to the new examinations, has, I believe, been less, or not materially different. For example, in the customs offices at New York, with their more than twelve hundred officers subject to the examinations, it seems that only about seventy, or hardly five per cent., have been displaced. Will G. H. tell us whether she thinks it would have been better to have removed seven hundred?

This establishment of a new system in our administrative methods is something like a revolution within the range of the examinations, through which proscription, favoritism, and partisanship—in short, political barbarism and savagery—have yielded to justice, morality, and personal merit, with immense advantage to the public service and the people, at the expense of the politicians and the office-seeking classes.

That we may more clearly see what this revolution means in practice, I make this citation from the First Report of the U. S. Civil Service Commission :

"When Draper, a Republican, was collector at the port of New York, he removed a subordinate as often as every third day for a whole year. When Smyth, another Republican, succeeded Draper as collector in 1866, he removed 830 of his 903 Republican subordinates, or at the average rate of three every four days. When Grinnell, another Republican, succeeded Smyth as collector in 1869, he removed 510 out of his 892 Republican subordinates in sixteen months. When Murphy, another Republican, succeeded Grinnell as collector in 1870, he removed Republicans at the rate of three every five days until 338 had been cast out. It was the expectation of such spoils which gave each candidate for collector the party strength which secured his confirmation. Thus, during a period of five years in succession, collectors, all belonging to one party, for the purpose of patronage, made removals at a single office of members of their own party more frequently than at the rate of one every day. In short, in 1565 secular days 1678 such removals were made. Upon the appointment of Mr. Arthur as collector in 1871, a system of examinations, defective as it was, put an end to this disgraceful proscription."

It was under Collector Arthur that competitive examinations began as required by the rules made by President Hayes. He removed less than one hundred and fifty in the about seven years he was collector. Such political barbarism as this extract shows seems now almost as incredible as slavery itself. I doubt if even G. H. would like to see the old proscription revived, especially against her own party. I could easily have answered all she has said about the Treasury Department without going beyond her own incriminating pages. She quotes, in apparent triumph, for her theory a chief of the largest division of the Treasury Department, who says, "We need most of all greater facilities for removal. He said it is harder to get a person out than to get him in. He has, for instance, five old men and two old women, the youngest of whom would have been retired long ago from any private firm, and all of whom together do not perform the work of two good vigorous

clerks. He says that he has, moreover, a dozen inefficient and lazy clerks, . . . who cannot or will not work."

Here, then, a believer in the model character of the best civil service under the sun declares that nineteen or more incompetent persons, some old and some young, whom no one will venture to remove, are to be found in a single division of a Department which has, I believe, more than eighty divisions! Are not these abuses to be reformed? I think G. H. must have misquoted her chief of division as to the authority to remove; for no such officer can be ignorant of the fact that the authority for removal is so absolute that every subordinate in the Treasury Department may be displaced any day of the year.

The real difficulty is that these incompetents, with some exceptions doubtless of worthy persons grown old, are dependants or *protégés* of Governors, great politicians, and Congressmen, or of their influential supporters, who have been foisted upon the public service by the coercive power of the Spoils System. The same vicious, extraneous influence which puts them in office keeps them there. The more good-for-nothing they become, the more anxious are their backers to make the government support them. Members of Congress very distinctly recognized the seriousness of this abuse and their share of responsibility for it, by forbidding, in the tenth section of the Civil Service Act, any member from making any recommendation for appointment under that law which should extend beyond the character and residence of the applicant.

When, however, applicants get into the civil service through good capacity and good character proved by the examinations, there is, save in very rare instances, no powerful influence behind to keep them there, and they can be readily removed. They feel that good work and good conduct alone will save them from removal. Yet such has been their superior merit that only four who came in under the rules are among the nearly one hundred and fifty displaced in the Treasury Department since March 4. I might further explain to G. H. that the superiority of the persons whom the Merit System of examinations brings into the public service, though of vast advantage, is by no means the most important aim or useful result of that system; but I have already given too much time to her rhapsody. Both parties by resolutions reiterated through a whole decade,—Congress by a comprehensive statute three years ago, for faithfully executing which it has made annual appropriations,—the popular voice by electing a President under pledges to a reform policy which he has faithfully executed,—and four administrations in succession by their official declarations, however faulty some of them in their practice,—have pronounced their judgment as to the

need and nature of Civil Service Reform ; and it is far, far indeed from the "nosegay," "up-as-bloom," "housekeeping" conception of G. H.

The spirit of that judgment is marching on, and will be more and more potential and unchallenged in every election of the future. New York and Massachusetts have wheeled into the line of the national reform policy, and no leader of either party in either State dares take ground against it. Other States are turning in the same direction. What does it matter, then, that here and there a doleful Bourbon cry is heard from the Spoils System bog for a retrograde movement towards political savagery, as Davis and Toombs continued to wail over the lost blessings of slavery? The minds which linger behind and fail to comprehend the spirit of an age are doomed never to lead it or to be important in it. A shrieking, garish blue-jay is no more able to bring back a winter than a graceful swallow is to bring forward a summer. There are conditions under which one may be a majority, and it is supremely noble to be in the right with two or three. But such things are possible only for lofty spirits with aspiring faith and prophetic insight, who, rising to the height of the nobler sentiments of their time, speak the wisdom of the next generation.

Before leaving G. H., let me set down, for the benefit of the few she may have misled, some extracts which show what experienced statesmen think of the nature and need of Civil Service Reform, and consequently what they think of her parody of it. I will first quote the words of a person under whom Mr. Blaine served as Secretary of State. In March, 1870, Mr. Garfield said in the House of Representatives, "We press appointments upon the Departments, we crowd the doors, . . . Senators and Representatives throng the offices and the bureaus until the public business is obstructed, . . . and men are appointed not because they are fit for their positions, but because we ask it. . . . There, Mr. Chairman, in my judgment, is the true field for retrenchment and reform ; . . . in this direction is the true line of statesmanship." And seven years later, in the *Atlantic Monthly*, Mr. Garfield declared that "one-third of the working hours of Senators is hardly sufficient to meet the demands upon them in reference to appointments. . . . The present system . . . impairs the efficiency of the legislators ; . . . it degrades the civil service ; . . . it repels from the service those high and manly qualities which are so essential to a pure and efficient administration ; and, finally, it debauches the public mind by holding up public office as the mere reward of party zeal."

President Grant, in his annual message in December, 1870, says, "There is no duty which so much embarrasses the Executive and heads of Departments as that of appointment. . . . The present system does

not secure the best men, and not often fit men, for the public service. The elevation and purification of the civil service of the government will be hailed with approval by the people of the whole United States." And I may add here that my experience under him as a Civil Service Commissioner enables me to know how profound was his sense of the need of such a reform; and the last words, I believe, which he ever uttered officially upon the subject expressed his "mortification" that Congress had failed to give an appropriation for enforcing the Civil Service Rules, which in two messages he had declared to be beneficial, and for which he had asked twenty-five thousand dollars a year.

The language next quoted is from a report made by a committee of the Senate, of which Senator Hawley was a member, upon the Civil Service Bill, May 15, 1882: "It has come to pass that the work of paying political debts and discharging political obligations, of rewarding personal friends and punishing political foes, is the first to confront each President. . . . He is compelled to give daily audience to those who personally seek places or to the army of those who back them. . . . Instead of the study of great questions of statesmanship, of broad and comprehensive policy, . . . or the relations of this great nation to the other nations of the earth, he must devote himself to the petty business of weighing in the balance the political considerations that shall determine the claim of this friend or of that supporter. . . . There has grown up such a perversion of the duties of that high office, such a prostitution of its ends unworthy of the great idea of this nation, . . . that a change has already come in the character of the government itself which if not corrected will be permanent and disastrous. . . . The Chief Magistrate of this nation wears out his time and his life in the petty service of party. . . . The Executive mansion is besieged, if not sacked. . . . Every Chief Magistrate, since the evil has grown to its present proportions, has cried out for deliverance. . . . The malign influence of political domination in appointments to office is wide-spread, and reaches out from the President himself to all possible means of approach to the appointing power. . . . It poisons the very air we breathe. No Congressman in accord with the dispenser of power can escape it. . . . When he wakes in the morning it is at his door, and when he retires at night it haunts his chamber. . . . It has come to be a wide-spread belief that the public service is a charitable institution, furnishing employment to the needy and homes to those adrift. The late Secretary of the Treasury, Mr. Windom, is reported to have said that five-sixths of the applicants for office while he administered the Treasury based their claims not on merits, fitness, or character, but on their poverty and incapacity to otherwise obtain a livelihood."

These are some of the trivialities about which Civil Service Reform needlessly troubles the country,—according to the great prophet and sage G. H. As I understand her, she even presents General Hawley, the Chairman of the Committee which made the final report in favor of the Civil Service Reform Bill in 1883, as regarding all reforms as needless! All logic seems impotent for answering such audacity—such a reasoner.

But what says the one man whose opinion she respects? Even Mr. Blaine's far too non-committal letter of acceptance of July, 1884, recognized the Civil Service Act, not as a great-humbug device for sustaining a great-humbug reform, but as a necessary and salutary law whose provisions ought to be extended. In the October following, when public sentiment in favor of reform had been much more developed, he bore testimony to the good effects of the law in a speech at Brooklyn, New York, by declaring that the "encouraging improvement of the civil service of the United States will be continued and further developed as experience shall point the way," and that "what has been accomplished is but the foreshadowing of that which a more enlarged experience shall demonstrate to be wise and patriotic." Did G. H. then think so, or was there a division in the family? At that decisive hour it was the distrust she had sown years before which was fatal to Mr. Blaine. She was believed to have expressed the real views of the whole family. He had the quick sagacity to see the peril of his position in the strength of the reform sentiment in New York, but he had been too late in making an emphatic commitment to a reform policy.

As we mention the names of those brilliant Republican leaders Blaine and Garfield, we may well recall that awful tragedy at the railway-station in Washington, where they were together,—when the old Spoils System struck a blow, as fatal to itself as to its illustrious victim, which rang round the world. These words from the *Princeton Review*, written soon after, are worthy of repetition here: "'It was no one man who killed Abraham Lincoln,—it was the spirit of treason and slavery inspired with despairing hate that struck him down,' said President Garfield in the House of Representatives, the day after the assassination, applying the logic now strikingly applicable to his own case. In the case of Guiteau it needs neither logic nor the lessons of history to connect the bloody deed with its cause. It was not left with reformers or pessimists to discover it. The assassin himself has declared it. Every civilized nation has taken notice of it. . . . With marvellous promptness and unanimity, hardly less in foreign countries than among ourselves, the source and significance of Guiteau's act have been found in our Spoils System of administration. . . . It draws crowds of male and

female office-seekers to Washington, of whom Guiteau was one. It degrades the government and the morality of all who serve it in the estimation of the people. We have now before us many advertisements, cut from three different Washington journals within a few weeks, of this desperate office-seeking class. . . . Failing to get offices through members of Congress, they now openly offer to give a portion of their salaries—sometimes a fifth of it—for a place. These unprecedented facts disclose a nefarious traffic in office, none the less ominous because in a city where so many men are separated from their families and so many office-seeking women are in desperate circumstances. Want of space must exclude all but a single example of these strange and suggestive advertisements, which is as follows: ‘Wanted, by a lady who has Congressional influence, a position in one of the Departments. Will give twenty per cent. of her salary. Address F. M., *Republican Office*.’ . . . This reveals a deplorable state of things, analogous to that which existed in England in the times of Walpole and Newcastle.”

From a late article in the *North American Review* I will add this language, not less suggestive, on the same point: “Not many weeks since, a young lady in a great Department, amid sobs and imprecations, charged the head of the office there, in my hearing, with putting her out of a laborer’s place to make a place for *his own sweetheart*. The charge was not denied. That lady has since, by her own merits, in an examination, won a higher position.” The quick imagination of women will supply the more lamentable features which are hardly hinted at in these citations. But I must be allowed to say that to me it seems strange indeed, while men—reformers—are endeavoring to suppress such scandalous abuses, and to open a way by which women may enter the public service by their own merits, without compromise of their delicacy or self-respect, that a woman, who prefers to go by on the other side, is not content to be silent, but feels herself authorized to denounce these reformers as “murmurers, walking after their own lusts,” “ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness,” “filthy dreamers, evoking filth in idle dreams.” Who, or what, indeed, is our God, if we are conscious of our acts, when we can thus go on the other side in the presence of women thus exposed, belching such unwomanly words, and denouncing reform as dealing only with trivialities?

There is yet another grave abuse of the old system against which five sections of the Civil Service Act of 1883 are exclusively directed, of which G. H. seems unconscious. I mean that of political assessments, the degrading and corrupt consequences of which could not be adequately set forth in the entire space of this article. What injustice, what encouragement of partisan despotism, what sense of degrada-

tion and inducements to neglect of duty on the part of the humbler servants of the nation, what discouragement of all honesty, of all manly independence in politics, and of all disinterested efforts for principle, can be greater or more demoralizing than those which spring from a system which subjected to arbitrary extortion the salary of every officer and the wages of every employee of the government, at the bidding alike of their official superiors and of the party managers, on the pain of dismissal! The arbitrary extortions from the tens of millions paid in wages and salaries every year to the servants of the nation, more emphatically than the offices themselves, were the spoils for which parties fought and by which they were degraded, gaining thus vast sums, which were used to subsidize the press, to bribe voters, and to keep the dominant party in power. Though the act has by no means suppressed this abuse, it has so greatly curtailed it, and has so emboldened public condemnation of it, as to make assessment-extortion far more difficult and disgraceful than before. What has been accomplished marks an era in the purification of our politics. I think hardly more than a fifth part as much money was thus extorted at the last election as in elections before the act was passed.

I have space but for a glance at the Civil Service Rules and the examinations under them.

The main source of abuse, aside from assessments, was the power to bestow offices and salaries as mere favors, or as rewards for subserviency to parties, great politicians, and officers. So long as that power existed it was certain that offices would be sought through the use of every form of vicious influence and demoralizing solicitation. The most effective way of limiting that power was to enable worthy persons to enter the service on their own merits and through their own efforts. It must be made plain that public office is a public trust, and that the appointing power, being a part of that trust, is consequently neither an agency of the dominant party for its own ends nor for dispensing charity to office-seekers.

It was plain, on the other hand, that certain kinds and amounts of information are essential to the proper doing of the public work, and that those who offer, for the salaries, the best character and capacity for doing the public work, have the highest claim for an appointment. Legislative officers, from the very nature of their functions, ought to represent the interests and opinions of those for whom they act. Their political opinions in the matter of making laws are, consequently, relevant and important.

The President and his legal advisers,—members of his Cabinet,—and, to a certain extent, diplomatic officers, are bound to carry out the

political policy approved by the people at the elections. But the vast clerical force in the Departments and in the customs offices and the post-offices of the country are in no sense representative officers, and there is no policy, except that of honesty and fidelity in doing the public work, which they can have any part in directing. They are in no sense the advisers of any political or representative officer. Their duties are the same, and should be performed in the same way, whichever party may control the administration. There is no more need and no more legitimate sphere for political opinions or party activity in a Department, post-office, or custom-house than in a church, school, asylum, or college. Those offices are mere business agencies for doing the public work economically and efficiently, regardless alike of both political and religious opinions. Why, then, have a political or a religious test for entering such offices or for remaining in them? A party which cannot keep in power or get into power by reason of sound principles and worthy candidates—in other words, which cannot get or keep office save by converting the business servants of the nation into partisan henchmen—ought to fail. The country has no need of it.

From these facts the way is clear to the establishment of the proper tests of capacity and character, irrespective of political or religious opinions, through which applicants, without the aid of influence or the need of appealing to great politicians or officials, may work their own way into the public service.

It is plain that, to the precise extent to which they shall do this, patronage-mongering, the corrupt use of influence, demoralizing pressure and solicitation for office, and all the multifarious evils that spring from them, will cease. If five hundred or five thousand offices shall be filled by applicants winning them in a manly competition of merit as between themselves, it is plain that there will be so many the less to be wrangled for and raffled for, to be used as bribes for votes, to be secretly given away as official favors, or to be awarded for corrupt partisan work.

The abuses to which I have referred had become so intolerable in Washington even prior to 1855 that Congress was compelled, in that year, to establish a system of examinations, which were enforced until competitive examinations were established. But these first examinations lacked various safeguards needed to make them honest and effective; and, above all, they allowed the politicians and great officers to say who alone should be examined. Only those of one party, and generally only the favorites of the great officers and politicians of that party, could gain access to them. While, therefore, they kept out most of the mere dunces, they did not open the public service to merit irrespective of politics. They did, however, make it clear that through

examinations, properly organized and based upon sound principles, the government might easily secure the superior capacity and character which it needs.

The Civil Service Act of January 16, 1883, provided for free, open examinations, in which all apparently qualified, irrespective of their political or religious opinions, might take part. The questions, of various grades, were to take no notice of political or religious views, but were to call for the amount of information in the several parts of the public service which is needed there. They were, consequently, to be different for the different parts of the service.

Every person apparently qualified was to be allowed to take part in the examinations, without the least need of the consent or the influence of any party manager or great officer. Every person examined was to have his papers marked according to the merits of his written answers to carefully-prepared printed questions. Superiority of qualifications thus shown was to give priority in appointment in the order of merit. Such free examinations in which the comparative merits of those seeking any part of the service are fairly put in comparison are known as *competitive examinations*. It is only in their freedom and justice that they are peculiar.

They were not new. They had not only been tried with useful results under President Grant at Washington, but they had greatly improved, as we have seen, the administration of the Post-Office, the Naval Office, and the Collector's office at the city of New York. They had also, upon a long trial, proved to be beneficial in Great Britain. Colonel Burt at the Naval Office and Mr. Pearson at the Post-Office at New York City have been reappointed by President Cleveland, mainly by reason of their courage and public spirit in enforcing these competitive examinations of the people against the politicians, patronage-mongers, and spoilsmen who are their natural enemies, and who originate the malicious falsehoods afloat concerning the difficulty of the questions. The questions, save a very few technical ones for places where a knowledge of science or some language is required, do not go beyond the teachings of the public schools. They are doubtless, as they ought to be, beyond the capacity of most of the flunkies and bullies who press and clamor for office.

In more fully testing a new system, sure to be misrepresented and obstructed by its enemies, it was desirable to keep it at first within the limits of thorough supervision. Once proved useful within such limits, it could be easily extended. It was decided, therefore, to make the trial within about fourteen thousand places, nearly five thousand six hundred being in the departments at Washington, more than that number in the

twenty-four largest post-offices, and about two thousand six hundred in the twenty-three largest customs offices, extending from Portland, Maine, to New Orleans and San Francisco. That part of the public service in which vacancies can be filled only from among those examined under the Civil Service Commission is known as the *Classified Civil Service*. It extends to no laborer, to no elective officer, and to no officer subject to confirmation by the Senate. Separate examinations of several different grades are held for each post-office and customs office, and for the departments within that service. The Civil Service rules for enforcing the act of 1883 are under the direct charge of the Commission, the members of which are appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate. The President, who alone makes the rules, can extend them to other Executive offices.

About fifteen thousand persons have been examined, and several thousand have been appointed from those examined, under the rules. More than seventy per cent. of all those examined have had only a public-school education, and their average age is almost precisely thirty years,—a very decisive answer to the oft-repeated charges of the politicians that only boys and college graduates can get offices under the Merit System. Out of about six thousand persons examined in the year prior to January 16, 1885, only four hundred and forty-nine had ever been in college; and the report for the last year, soon to appear, will show similar results.

But I have no space for further particulars. They are given in detail in the reports of the Commission, which are sent in answer to requests to be addressed to the Civil Service Commission at Washington.

The practical results of the new system have been salutary. Congressmen and the appointing officers have been relieved of a vast amount of demoralizing solicitation. Vicious intrigues and bargains for office have been greatly reduced. No one of these fourteen thousand places can now be promised for votes or given as a reward for work for a candidate. A worthy man can work his own way into office. The people, I think, are likely to have more respect for the public service now that they see these places are won by merit and not captured by influence and begging. Office is being regarded more and more as a trust, and less and less as a prize. The people as never before are taking notice that the government regards its salaries and honors as due to the most worthy, and not as rewards for the most partisan and subservient. The friends of public-school education are seeing more and more clearly that the Merit System is their natural ally, and that it is a barrier against demagogues and schemers. Patronage being lost, party managers must rely more on sound principles and superior candidates. Assessments being lost, they

must appeal to the people for money. Thus the people gain what the politicians lose.

In a special message sent to Congress in February, 1885, President Arthur congratulated the country upon the success of the new system. A committee of the House of Representatives, composed of eight Democrats and five Republicans, has commended its salutary effects. The administration of President Cleveland has enforced the law and rules with vigor and good faith, and his Cabinet has sustained him in that enforcement. No violation of the rules or limitation of their scope has been allowed. More and more of late the new system is being recognized as certain to be as permanent as it is salutary.

If Congress will make the needed appropriations, the examinations can be extended to additional offices in the Postal and Customs service, to consuls, to the District of Columbia, and to any other offices where they are appropriate, as the President may direct. The examinations now being enforced in the State service of New York and Massachusetts, and in the municipal service of New York City, Brooklyn, N.Y., Boston, and in nearly all the other cities of these States, indicate that it will not be long before there will be a great extension of the Merit System of office. I believe the time is not remote when the reform policy now being enforced in a limited sphere will prevail in the national, State, and municipal administrations of the country.

Dorman B. Eaton.

IRONY.

I SET my gaze upon two stars that seemed
Twin orbs of equal flame in heaven's dark height,
So close with interblended rays they beamed
From the deep dome of night.

"Oh, happy stars," I thought, "like this to bide
Through mighty changes, lovingly withstood,
Companioned each of each, whate'er betide,
In silver sisterhood!"

Then sounded to my sense, from night's great thrall:
"On either star, this hour, there dwells a race
That knows not if the other lives at all,
So vast their sundering space!"

Edgar Fawcett

THE GOLD WULFRIC.

I.

THERE are only two gold coins of Wulfric of Mercia in existence anywhere. One of them is in the British Museum, and the other one is in my possession.

The most terrible incident in the whole course of my career is intimately connected with my first discovery of that gold Wulfric. It is not too much to say that my entire life has been deeply colored by it, and I shall make no apology, therefore, for narrating the story in some little detail. I was stopping down at Lichfield for my summer holiday in July, 1879, when I happened one day accidentally to meet an old ploughman who told me he had got a lot of coins at home that he had ploughed up on what he called "the field of battle," a place I had already recognized as the site of the old Mercian kings' wooden palace.

I went home with him at once in high glee, for I had been a collector of old English gold and silver coinage for several years, and I was in hopes that my friendly ploughman's find might contain something good in the way of Anglo-Saxon pennies or shillings, considering the very promising place in which he had unearthed it.

As it turned out, I was not mistaken. The little hoard, concealed within a rude piece of Anglo-Saxon pottery (now No. 127 in Case LIX. at the South Kensington Museum), comprised a large number of common Frankish Merovingian coins (I beg Mr. Freeman's pardon for not calling them Merwings), together with two or three Kentish pennies of some rarity from the mints of Ethelbert at Canterbury and Dover. Among these minor treasures, however, my eye at once fell upon a single gold piece, obviously imitated from the imperial Roman aureus of the Pretender Carausius, which I saw immediately must be an almost unique bit of money of the very greatest numismatic interest. I took it up and examined it carefully. A minute's inspection fully satisfied me that it was indeed a genuine mintage of Wulfric of Mercia, the like of which I had never before to my knowledge set eyes upon.

I immediately offered the old man five pounds down for the whole collection. He closed with the offer forthwith in the most contented fashion, and I bought them and paid for them all upon the spot without further parley.

When I got back to my lodgings that evening I could do nothing but look at my gold Wulfric. I was charmed and delighted at the

actual possession of so great a treasure, and was burning to take it up at once to the British Museum to see whether even in the national collection they had got another like it. So, being by nature of an enthusiastic and impulsive disposition, I determined to go up to town the very next day and try to track down the history of my Wulfric. "It'll be a good opportunity," I said to myself, "to kill two birds with one stone. Emily's people haven't got out of town yet. I can call there in the morning, arrange to go to the theatre with them at night, and then drive at once to the Museum and see how much my find is worth."

Next morning I was off to town by an early train, and before one o'clock I had got to Emily's.

"Why, Harold," she cried, running down to meet me and kiss me in the passage (for she had seen me get out of my hansom from the drawing-room window), "how on earth is it that you're up in town to-day? I thought you were down at Lichfield still with your Oxford reading-party."

"So I am," I answered, "officially at Lichfield; but I've come up to-day partly to see you, and partly on a piece of business about a new coin I've just got hold of."

"A coin?" Emily answered, pretending to pout. "Me and a coin! That's how you link us together mentally, is it? I declare, Harold, I shall be getting jealous of those coins of yours some day, I'm certain. You can't even come up to see me for a day, it seems, unless you've got some matter of a coin as well to bring you to London. Moral: never get engaged to a man with a fancy for collecting coins and medals."

"Oh, but this is really such a beauty, Emily," I cried, enthusiastically. "Just look at it, now. Isn't it lovely? Do you notice the inscription,—'Wulfric Rex'? I've never yet seen one anywhere else at all like it."

Emily took it in her hands carelessly. "I don't see any points about that coin in particular," she answered, in her bantering fashion, "more than about any other old coin that you'd pick up anywhere."

That was all we said then about the matter. Subsequent events engrained the very words of that short conversation into the inmost substance of my brain with indelible fidelity. I shall never forget them to my dying moment.

I stopped about an hour altogether at Emily's, had lunch, and arranged that she and her mother should accompany me that evening to the Lyceum. Then I drove off to the British Museum, and asked for leave to examine the Anglo-Saxon coins of the Mercian period.

The superintendent, who knew me well enough by sight and repute

as a responsible amateur collector, readily gave me permission to look at a drawerful of the earliest Mercian gold and silver coinage. I had brought one or two numismatic books with me, and I sat down to have a good look at those delightful cases.

After thoroughly examining the entire series and the documentary evidence, I came to the conclusion that there was just one other gold Wulfric in existence besides the one I kept in my pocket, and that was the beautiful and well-preserved example in the case before me. It was described in the last edition of Sir Theophilus Wroxton's "*Northumbrian and Mercian Numismatist*" as an absolutely unique gold coin of Wulfric of Mercia, in imitation of the well-known aureus of the false emperor Carausius. I turned to the catalogue to see the price at which it had been purchased by the nation. To my intense surprise, I saw it entered at one hundred and fifty pounds.

I was perfectly delighted at my magnificent acquisition.

On comparing the two examples, however, I observed that, though both struck from the same die and apparently at the same mint (to judge by the letter), they differed slightly from one another in two minute accidental particulars. My coin, being of course merely stamped with a hammer and then cut to shape, after the fashion of the time, was rather more closely clipped round the edge than the Museum specimen; and it had also a slight dent on the obverse side, just below the W of Wulfric. In all other respects the two examples were of necessity absolutely identical.

I stood for a long time gazing at the case and examining the two duplicates with the deepest interest, while the Museum keeper (a man of the name of Mactavish, whom I had often seen before on previous visits) walked about within sight, as is the rule on all such occasions, and kept a sharp lookout that I did not attempt to meddle with any of the remaining coins or cases.

Unfortunately, as it turned out, I had not mentioned to the superintendent my own possession of a duplicate Wulfric; nor had I called Mactavish's attention to the fact that I had pulled a coin of my own, for purposes of comparison, out of my waistcoat-pocket. To say the truth, I was inclined to be a little secretive as yet about my gold Wulfric, because until I had found out all that was known about it I did not want anybody else to be told of my discovery.

At last I had fully satisfied my curiosity, and was just about to return the Museum Wulfric to its little round compartment in the neat case (having already replaced my own duplicate in my waistcoat-pocket), when all at once, I can't say how, I gave a sudden start, and dropped the coin with a jerk unexpectedly upon the floor of the museum.

It rolled away out of sight in a second, and I stood appalled in an agony of distress and terror in the midst of the gallery.

Next moment I had hastily called Mactavish to my side, and got him to lock up the open drawer while we two went down on hands and knees and hunted through the length and breadth of the gallery for the lost Wulfric.

It was absolutely hopeless. Plain sailing as the thing seemed, we could see no trace of the missing coin from one end of the room to the other. At last I leaned in a cold perspiration against the edge of one of the glass cabinets, and gave it up in despair with a sinking heart. "It's no use, Mactavish," I murmured, desperately: "the thing's lost, and we shall never find it."

Mactavish looked me quietly in the face. "In that case, sir," he answered, firmly, "by the rules of the Museum I must call the superintendent." He put his hand, with no undue violence, but in a strictly official manner, upon my right shoulder. Then he blew a little whistle. "I'm sorry to be rude to you, sir," he went on, apologetically, "but by the rules of the Museum I can't take my hand off you till the superintendent gives me leave to release you."

Another keeper answered the whistle. "Send the superintendent," Mactavish said, quietly. "A coin missing."

In a minute the superintendent was upon the spot. When Mactavish told him I had dropped the gold Wulfric of Mercia he shook his head very ominously. "This is a bad business, Mr. Tait," he said, gloomily. "A unique coin, as you know, and one of the most valuable in the whole of our large Anglo-Saxon collection."

"Is there a mouse-hole anywhere?" I cried, in agony,—“any place where it might have rolled down and got mislaid or concealed for the moment?"

The superintendent went down instantly on his own hands and knees, pulled up every piece of the cocoanut matting with minute deliberation, and searched the whole place thoroughly from end to end, but found nothing. He spent nearly an hour on that thorough search. Meanwhile, Mactavish never for a moment relaxed his hold upon me.

At last the superintendent desisted from the search as quite hopeless, and approached me very politely.

"I'm extremely sorry, Mr. Tait," he said, in the most courteous possible manner, "but by the rules of the Museum I am absolutely compelled either to search you for the coin or to give you into custody. It may, you know, have got caught somewhere about your person. No doubt you would prefer, of the two, that I should look in all your pockets and the folds of your clothing."

The position was terrible. I could stand it no longer.

"Mr. Harbourne," I said, breaking out once more from head to foot into a cold sweat, "I must tell you the truth. I have brought a duplicate gold Wulfric here to-day to compare with the Museum specimen, and I have got it this very moment in my waistcoat-pocket."

The superintendent gazed back at me with a mingled look of incredulity and pity.

"My dear sir," he answered, very gently, "this is altogether a most unfortunate business, but I'm afraid I must ask you to let me look at the duplicate you speak of."

I took it, trembling, out of my waistcoat-pocket and handed it across to him without a word. The superintendent gazed at it for a moment in silence; then, in a tone of the profoundest commiseration, he said, slowly, "Mr. Tait, I grieve to be obliged to contradict you. This is our own specimen of the gold Wulfric!"

The whole Museum whirled round me violently, and before I knew anything more I fainted.

II.

When I came to, I found myself seated in the superintendent's room, with a policeman standing quietly in the background.

As soon as I had fully recovered consciousness, the superintendent motioned the policeman out of the room for a while, and then gently forced me to swallow a brandy-and-soda.

"Mr. Tait," he said, compassionately, after an awkward pause, "you are a very young man indeed, and, I believe, hitherto of blameless character. Now, I should be very sorry to have to proceed to extremities against you. I know to what lengths, in a moment of weakness, the desire to possess a rare coin will often lead a connoisseur, under stress of exceptional temptation. I have not the slightest doubt in my own mind that you did really accidentally drop this coin; that you went down on your knees honestly intending to find it; that the accident suggested to you the ease with which you might pick it up and proceed to pocket it; that you yielded temporarily to that unfortunate impulse; and that by the time I arrived upon the scene you were already overcome with remorse and horror. I saw as much immediately in your very countenance. Nevertheless, I determined to give you the benefit of the doubt, and I searched over the whole place in the most thorough and conscientious manner. . . . As you know, I found nothing. . . . Mr. Tait, I cannot bear to have to deal harshly with you. I recognize the temptation and the agony of repentance that instantly followed it. Sir, I give you one chance. If you will retract the obviously false story that you just now told me, and confess that the coin

I found in your pocket was in fact, as I know it to be, the Museum specimen, I will forthwith dismiss the constable, and will never say another word to any one about the whole matter. I don't want to ruin you, but I can't, of course, be put off with a falsehood. Think the matter carefully over with yourself. Do you or do you not still adhere to that very improbable and incredible story?"

Horried and terror-stricken as I was, I could not avoid feeling grateful to the superintendent for the evident kindness with which he was treating me. The tears rose at once into my eyes.

"Mr. Harbourne," I cried, passionately, "you are very good, very generous. But you quite mistake the whole position. The story I told you was true, every word of it. I bought that gold Wulfric from a ploughman at Lichfield, and it is not absolutely identical with the Museum specimen which I dropped upon the floor. It is closer clipped around the edges, and it has a distinct dent upon the obverse side, just below the W of Wulfric."

The superintendent paused a second, and scanned my face very closely.

"Have you a knife or a file in your pocket?" he asked, in a much sterner and more official tone.

"No," I replied, "neither,—neither."

"You are sure?"

"Certain."

"Shall I search you myself, or shall I give you in custody?"

"Search me yourself," I answered, confidently.

He put his hand quietly into my left-hand breast-pocket, and, to my utter horror and dismay, drew forth, what I had up to that moment utterly forgotten, a pair of folding pocket nail-scissors, in a leather case, of course with a little file on either side.

My heart stood still within me.

"That is quite sufficient, Mr. Tait," the superintendent went on, severely. "Had you alleged that the Museum coin was smaller than your own imaginary one, you might have been able to put in the facts as good evidence. But I see the exact contrary is the case. You have stooped to a disgraceful and unworthy subterfuge. This base deception aggravates your guilt. You have deliberately defaced a valuable specimen in order, if possible, to destroy its identity."

What could I say in return? I stammered and hesitated.

"Mr. Harbourne," I cried, piteously, "the circumstances seem to look terribly against me. But nevertheless you are quite mistaken. The missing Wulfric will come to light sooner or later and prove me innocent."

He walked up and down the room once or twice irresolutely, and then he turned round to me with a very fixed and determined aspect which fairly terrified me.

"Mr. Tait," he said, "I am straining every point possible to save you, but you make it very difficult for me by your continued falsehood. I am doing quite wrong in being so lenient to you : I am proposing, in short, to compound a felony. But I cannot bear, without letting you have just one more chance, to give you in charge for a common robbery. I will let you have ten minutes to consider the matter ; and I beseech you, I beg of you, I implore you, to retract this absurd and despicable lie before it is too late forever. Just consider that if you refuse I shall have to hand you over to the constable out there, and that the whole truth must come out in court, and must be blazoned forth to the entire world in every newspaper. The policeman is standing here by the door. I will leave you alone with your own thoughts for ten minutes."

As he spoke, he walked out gravely, and shut the door solemnly behind him. The clock on the chimney-piece pointed with its hands to twenty minutes past three.

It was an awful dilemma. I hardly knew how to act under it. On the one hand, if I admitted for the moment that I had tried to steal the coin, I could avoid all immediate unpleasant circumstances ; and, as it would be sure to turn up again in cleaning the Museum, I should be able at last to prove my innocence to Mr. Harbourne's complete satisfaction. But, on the other hand, the lie—for it *was* a lie—stuck in my throat : I could not humble myself to say I had committed a mean and dirty action which I loathed with all the force and energy of my nature. No, no ! come what would of it, I must stick by the truth, and trust to that to clear up everything.

But if the superintendent really insisted on giving me in charge, how very awkward to have to telegraph about it to Emily ! Fancy saying to the girl you are in love with, "I can't go with you to the theatre this evening, because I have been taken off to jail on a charge of stealing a valuable coin from the British Museum." It was too terrible !

Yet, after all, I thought to myself, if the worst comes to the worst, Emily will have faith enough in me to know it is ridiculous ; and, indeed, the imputation could in any case only be temporary. As soon as the thing got into court I could bring up the Lichfield ploughman to prove my possession of a gold Wulfric ; and I could bring up Emily to prove that I had shown it to her that very morning. How lucky that I had happened to take it out and let her look at it ! My case was,

happily, as plain as a pike-staff. It was only momentarily that the weight of the evidence seemed so perversely to go against me.

Turning over all these various considerations in my mind with anxious hesitancy, the ten minutes managed to pass away almost before I had thoroughly realized the deep gravity of the situation.

As the clock on the chimney-piece pointed to the half-hour, the door opened once more, and the superintendent entered solemnly. "Well, Mr. Tait," he said, in an anxious voice, "have you made up your mind to make a clean breast of it? Do you now admit, after full deliberation, that you have endeavored to steal and clip the gold Wulfric?"

"No," I answered, firmly, "I do not admit it; and I will willingly go before a jury of my countrymen to prove my innocence."

"Then God help you, poor boy!" the superintendent cried, despondently. "I have done my best to save you, and you will not let me. Policeman, this is your prisoner. I give him in custody on a charge of stealing a gold coin, the property of the trustees of this Museum, valued at one hundred and seventy-five pounds sterling."

The policeman laid his hand upon my wrist. "You will have to go along with me to the station, sir," he said, quietly.

Terrified and stunned as I was by the awfulness of the accusation, I could not forget or overlook the superintendent's evident reluctance and kindness. "Mr. Harbourne," I cried, "you have tried to do your best for me. I am grateful to you for it, in spite of your terrible mistake, and I shall yet be able to show you that I am innocent."

He shook his head gloomily. "I have done my duty," he said, with a shudder. "I have never before had a more painful one. Policeman, I must ask you now to do yours."

III.

The police are always considerate to respectable-looking prisoners, and I had no difficulty in getting the sergeant in charge of the lock-up to telegraph for me to Emily, to say that I was detained by important business, which would prevent me taking her and her mother to the theatre that evening. But when I explained to him that my detention was merely temporary, and that I should be able to disprove the whole story as soon as I went before the magistrates, he winked most unpleasantly at the constable who had brought me in, and observed, in a tone of vulgar sarcasm, "We have a good many gentlemen here who says the same, sir: don't we, Jim? but they don't always find it so easy as they expected when they stands up afore the beak to prove their statements."

I began to reflect that even a temporary prison is far from being a pleasant place for a man to stop in.

Next morning they took me up before the magistrate, and, as the Museum authorities of course proved a *prima facie* case against me, and as my solicitor advised me to reserve my defence, owing to the difficulty of getting up my witness from Lichfield in reasonable time, I was duly committed for trial at the next sessions of the Central Criminal Court. I had often read before that people had been committed for trial, but till that moment I had no idea what a very unpleasant sensation it really is.

However, as I was a person of hitherto unblemished character, and wore a good coat made by a fashionable tailor, the magistrate decided to admit me to bail, if two sureties in five hundred pounds each were promptly forthcoming for the purpose. Luckily, I had no difficulty in finding friends who believed in my story; and, as I felt sure the lost Wulfric would soon be found in cleaning the Museum, I suffered perhaps a little less acutely than I might otherwise have done, owing to my profound confidence in the final triumph of the truth.

Nevertheless, as the case would be fully reported next morning in all the papers, I saw at once that I must go straight off and explain the matter without delay to Emily.

I will not dwell upon that painful interview. I will only say that Emily behaved as I of course knew she would behave. She was horrified and indignant at the dreadful accusation; and, woman-like, she was very angry with the superintendent. "He ought to have taken your word for it, naturally, Harold," she cried through her tears. "But what a good thing, anyhow, that you happened to show the coin to me! I should recognize it anywhere among ten thousand."

"That's well, darling," I said, trying to kiss away her tears and cheer her up a little. "I haven't the slightest doubt that when the trial comes we shall be able triumphantly to vindicate me from this terrible, groundless accusation."

IV.

When the trial did actually come on, the Museum authorities began by proving their case against me in what seemed the most horribly damning fashion. The superintendent proved that on such and such a day, in such and such a case, he had seen a gold coin of Wulfric of Mercia, the property of the Museum. He and Mactavish detailed the circumstances under which the coin was lost. The superintendent explained how he had asked me to submit to a search, and how, to avoid that indignity, I had myself produced from my waistcoat-pocket a gold

coin of Wulfric of Mercia, which I asserted to be a duplicate specimen and my own property. The counsel for the Crown proceeded thus with the examination :

"Do you recognize the coin I now hand you?"

"I do."

"What is it?"

"The unique gold coin of Wulfric of Mercia, belonging to the Museum."

"You have absolutely no doubt as to its identity?"

"Absolutely none whatsoever."

"Does it differ in any respect from the same coin as you previously saw it?"

"Yes. It has been clipped round the edge with a sharp instrument, and a slight dent has been made by pressure on the obverse side, just below the W of Wulfric."

"Did you suspect the prisoner at the bar of having mutilated it?"

"I did, and I asked him whether he had a knife in his possession. He answered no. I then asked him whether he would submit to be searched for a knife. He consented, and on my looking in his pocket I found the pair of nail-scissors I now produce, with a small file on either side."

"Do you believe the coin might have been clipped with those scissors?"

"I do. The gold is very soft, having little alloy in its composition ; and it could be easily cut by a strong-wristed man with a knife or scissors."

As I listened, I didn't wonder that the jury looked as if they already considered me guilty : but I smiled to myself when I thought how utterly Emily's and the ploughman's evidence would rebut this unworthy suspicion.

The next witness was the Museum-cleaner. His evidence at first produced nothing fresh, but just at last counsel set before him a paper containing a few scraps of yellow metal, and asked him triumphantly whether he recognized them. He answered yes.

There was a profound silence. The court was interested and curious. I couldn't quite understand it all, but I felt a terrible sinking.

"What are they?" asked the hostile barrister.

"They are some fragments of gold which I found in shaking the cocoanut matting on the floor of gallery 27 the Saturday after the attempted theft."

I felt as if a mine had unexpectedly been sprung beneath me. How on earth those fragments of soft gold could ever have got there I couldn't

imagine; but I saw the damaging nature of this extraordinary and inexplicable coincidence in half a second.

My counsel cross-examined all the witnesses for the prosecution, but failed to elicit anything of any value from any one of them. On the contrary, his questions put to the metallurgist of the Mint, who was called to prove the quality of the gold, only brought out a very strong opinion to the effect that the clippings were essentially similar in character to the metal composing the clipped Wulfric. No wonder the jury seemed to think the case was going decidedly against me.

Then my counsel called his witnesses. I listened in the profoundest suspense and expectation.

The first witness was the ploughman from Lichfield. He was a well-meaning but very puzzle-headed old man, and he was evidently frightened at being confronted by so many clever wig-wearing barristers.

Nevertheless, my counsel managed to get the true story out of him at last, with infinite patience, dexterity, and skill. The old man told us finally how he had found the coins and sold them to me for five pounds, and how one of them was of gold, with a queer head and goggle eyes pointed full face upon its surface.

When he had finished, the counsel for the Crown began his cross-examination. He handed the ploughman a gold coin. "Did you ever see that before?" he asked, quietly.

"To be sure I did," the man answered, looking at it open-mouthed.

"What is it?"

"It's the bit I sold Mr. Tait there,—the bit as I got out o' the old basin."

Counsel turned triumphantly to the judge. "My lord," he said, "this thing to which the witness swears is a gold piece of Ethelwulf of Wessex, by far the commonest and cheapest gold coin of the whole Anglo-Saxon period."

It was handed to the jury side by side with the Wulfric of Mercia; and the difference, as I knew myself, was in fact extremely noticeable. All that the old man could have observed in common between them must have been merely the archaic Anglo-Saxon character of the coinage.

As I heard that, I began to feel that it was really all over.

My counsel tried on the re-examination to shake the old man's faith in his identification and to make him transfer his story to the Wulfric which he had actually sold me. But it was all in vain. The ploughman had clearly the dread of perjury forever before his eyes, and wouldn't go back for any consideration upon his first sworn statement.

"No, no, mister," he said over and over again in reply to my counsel's bland suggestion: "you ain't going to make me forswear myself, for all your cleverness."

The next witness was Emily. She went into the box pale and red-eyed, but very confident. My counsel examined her admirably; and she stuck to her point with womanly persistence, that she had herself seen the clipped Wulfric, and no other coin, on the morning of the supposed theft. She knew it was so, because she distinctly remembered the inscription "Wulfric Rex," and the peculiar way the staring open eyes were represented with barbaric puerility.

Counsel for the Crown would only trouble the young lady with two questions. The first was a painful one, but it must be asked in the interests of justice. Were she and the prisoner at the bar engaged to be married to one another?

The answer came, slowly and timidly, "Yes."

Counsel drew a long breath, and looked her hard in the face. Could she read the inscription on that coin now produced?—handing her the Ethelwulf.

Great heavens! I saw at once the plot to disconcert her, but was utterly powerless to warn her against it.

Emily looked at it long and steadily. "No," she said, at last, growing deadly pale and grasping the wood-work of the witness-box convulsively: "I don't know the character in which it is written."

Of course not; for the inscription was in the peculiar semi-runio Anglo-Saxon letters. She had never read the words "Wulfric Rex," either. I had read them to her, and she had carried them away vaguely in her mind, imagining no doubt that she herself had actually deciphered them.

There was a slight pause, and I felt my blood growing cold within me. Then the counsel for the Crown handed her again the genuine Wulfric, and asked her whether the letters upon it which she professed to have read were or were not similar to those of the Ethelwulf.

Instead of answering, Emily bent down her head between her hands and burst suddenly into tears.

I was so much distressed at her terrible agitation that I forgot altogether for the moment my own perilous position, and I cried aloud, "My lord, my lord, will you not interpose to spare her any further questions?"

"I think," the judge said to the counsel for the Crown, "you might now permit the witness to stand down."

"I wish to re-examine, my lord," my counsel put in, hastily.

"No," I said in his ear,—“no. Whatever comes of it, not another

question. I had far rather go to prison than let her suffer this inexpressible torture for a single minute longer."

Emily was led down, still crying bitterly, into the body of the court, and the rest of the proceedings went on uninterrupted.

The theory of the prosecution was a simple and plausible one. I had bought a common Anglo-Saxon coin, probably an Ethelwulf, valued at about twenty-two shillings, from the old Lichfield ploughman. I had thereupon conceived the fraudulent idea of pretending that I had a duplicate of the rare Wulfric. I had shown the Ethelwulf, clipped in a particular fashion, to the lady whom I was engaged to marry. I had then defaced and altered the genuine Wulfric at the Museum into the same shape with the aid of my pocket nail-scissors. And I had finally made believe to drop the coin accidentally upon the floor, while I had really secreted it in my waistcoat-pocket. The theory for the defence had broken down utterly; and then there was the damning fact of the gold scrapings found in the cocoanut matting of the British Museum, which was to me the one great inexplicable mystery in the whole otherwise comprehensible mystification.

I felt myself that the case did indeed look very black against me. But would a jury venture to convict me on such very doubtful evidence?

The jury retired to consider their verdict. I stood in suspense in the dock, with my heart loudly beating. Emily remained in the body of the court below, looking up at me tearfully and penitently.

After twenty minutes the jury returned.

"Guilty or not guilty?"

The foreman answered aloud, "Guilty."

There was a piercing cry in the body of the court, and in a moment Emily was carried out half fainting and half hysterical.

The judge then calmly proceeded to pass sentence. He dwelt upon the enormity of my crime in one so well connected and so far removed from the dangers of mere vulgar temptations. He dwelt also upon the vandalism of which I had been guilty—myself a collector—in chipping and defacing a valuable and unique memorial of antiquity, the property of the nation. He did not wish to be severe upon a young man of hitherto blameless character; but the national collection must be secured against such a peculiarly insidious and cunning form of depredation. The sentence of the court was that I should be kept in—

Five years' penal servitude.

Crushed and annihilated as I was, I had still strength to utter a single final word. "My lord," I cried, "the missing Wulfric will yet be found, and will hereafter prove my perfect innocence."

"Remove the prisoner," said the judge, coldly.

They took me down to the court-yard unresisting, where the prison-van was standing in waiting.

On the steps I saw Emily and her mother, both crying bitterly. They had been told the sentence already, and were waiting to take a last farewell of me.

"Oh, Harold," Emily cried, flinging her arms around me wildly, "it's all my fault! It's my fault only! By my foolish stupidity I've lost your case. I've sent you to prison. Oh, Harold, I can never forgive myself. I've sent you to prison. I've sent you to prison."

"Dearest," I said, "it won't be for long. I shall soon be free again. They'll find the Wulfric sooner or later, and then of course they'll let me out again."

"Harold," she cried, "oh, Harold, Harold, don't you see? Don't you understand? This is a plot against you. It isn't lost. It isn't lost. That would be nothing. It's stolen! it's stolen!"

A light burst in upon me suddenly, and I saw in a moment the full depth of the peril that surrounded me.

V.

It was some time before I could sufficiently accustom myself to my new life in the Isle of Portland to be able to think clearly and distinctly about the terrible blow that had fallen upon me. In the midst of all the petty troubles and discomforts of prison existence I had no leisure at first fully to realize the fact that I was a convicted felon, with scarcely a hope—not of release; for that I cared little—but of rehabilitation.

Slowly, however, I began to grow habituated to the new hard life imposed upon me, and to think in my cell of the web of circumstance which had woven itself so irresistibly around me.

I had only one hope. Emily knew I was innocent. Emily suspected, like me, that the Wulfric had been stolen. Emily would do her best, I felt certain, to heap together fresh evidence and unravel this mystery to its very bottom.

Meanwhile, I thanked heaven for the hard mechanical daily toil of cutting stone in Portland Prison. I was a strong athletic young fellow enough. I was glad now that I had always loved the river at Oxford: my arms were stout and muscular. I was able to take my part in the regular work of the gang to which I belonged. Had it been otherwise,—had I been set down to some quiet sedentary occupation, as first-class misdemeanants often are,—I should have worn my heart out soon with thinking perpetually of poor Emily's terrible trouble.

When I first came, the deputy governor, knowing my case well (had there not been leaders about me in all the papers?), very kindly asked me whether I would wish to be given work in the book-keeping department, where many educated convicts were employed as clerks and assistants. But I begged particularly to be put into an out-door gang, where I might have to use my limbs constantly and so keep my mind from eating itself up with perpetual thinking. The deputy governor immediately consented, and gave me work in a quarrying gang, at the west end of the island, near Deadman's Bay, on the edge of the Chesil.

For three months I worked hard at learning the trade of a quarryman, and succeeded far better than any of the other new hands who were set to learn at the same time with me. Their heart was not in it; mine was. Anything to escape that gnawing agony.

The other men in the gang were not agreeable or congenial companions. They taught me their established modes of intercommunication, and told me several facts about themselves which did not tend to endear them to me. One of them, 1247, was put in for the manslaughter of his wife by kicking: he was a low-browed, brutal London drayman, and he occupied the next cell to mine, where he disturbed me much in my sleepless nights by his loud snoring. Another, a much slighter and more intelligent-looking man, was a skilled burglar, sentenced to fourteen years for "cracking a crib" in the neighborhood of Hampstead. A third was a sailor, convicted of gross cruelty to a defenceless Lascar. They all told me the nature of their crimes with a brutal frankness which fairly surprised me; but when I explained to them in return that I had been put in upon a false accusation, they treated my remarks with a galling contempt that was absolutely insupportable. After a short time I ceased to communicate with my fellow-prisoners in any way, and remained shut up with my own thoughts in utter isolation.

By and by I found that the other men in the same gang were beginning to dislike me strongly, and that some among them actually whispered to one another—what they seemed to consider a very strong point indeed against me—that I must really have been convicted by mistake, and that I was a regular stuck-up sneaking Methodist. They complained that I worked a great deal too hard and so made the other felons seem lazy by comparison; and they also objected to my prompt obedience to our warder's commands, as tending to set up an exaggerated and impossible standard of discipline.

Between this warder and myself, on the other hand, there soon sprang up a feeling which I might almost describe as one of friendship. Though by the rules of the establishment we could not communicate with one another except upon matters of business, I liked him for his

uniform courtesy, kindness, and forbearance; while I could easily see that he liked me in return, by contrast with the other men who were under his charge. He was one of those persons whom some experience of prisons then and since has led me to believe less rare than most people would imagine,—men in whom the dreary life of a prison warder, instead of engendering hardness of heart and cold unsympathetic sternness, has engendered a certain profound tenderness and melancholy of spirit. I grew quite fond of that one honest warder, among so many coarse and criminal faces; and I found, on the other hand, that my fellow-prisoners hated me all the more because, as they expressed it in their own disgusting jargon, I was sucking up to that confounded dog of a barker. It happened once, when I was left for a few minutes alone with the warder, that he made an attempt for a moment, contrary to regulations, to hold a little private conversation with me.

"1430," he said, in a low voice, hardly moving his lips, for fear of being overlooked, "what is your outside name?"

I answered quietly, without turning to look at him, "Harold Tait."

He gave a little involuntary start. "What?" he cried. "Not him that took a coin from the British Museum?"

I bridled up angrily. "I did not take it," I cried, with all my soul. "I am innocent, and have been put in here by some terrible error."

He was silent for half a second. Then he said, musingly, "Sir, I believe you. You are speaking the truth. I will do all I can to make things easy for you."

That was all he said then. But from that day forth he always spoke to me in private as "Sir," and never again as "1430."

An incident arose at last out of this condition of things which had a very important effect upon my future position.

One day, about three months after I was committed to prison, we were all told off as usual to work in a small quarry on the cliff-side overhanging the long expanse of pebbly beach known as the Chesil. I had reason to believe afterwards that a large open fishing-boat lying upon the beach below at the moment had been placed there as part of a concerted scheme by the friends of the Hampstead burglar, and that it contained ordinary clothing for all the men in our gang, except myself only. The idea was, evidently, that the gang should overpower the warder, seize the boat, change their clothes instantly, taking turns about meanwhile with the navigation, and make straight off for the shore at Lulworth, where they could easily disperse without much chance of being recaptured. But of all this I was of course quite ignorant at the time, for they had not thought well to intrust their secret to the ears of the sneaking virtuous Methodist.

A few minutes after we arrived at the quarry, I was working with two other men at putting a blast in, when I happened to look round quite accidentally, and, to my great horror, saw 1247, the brutal wife-kicker, standing behind with a huge block of stone in his hands, poised just above the warder's head, in a threatening attitude. The other men stood around waiting and watching. I had only just time to cry out, in a tone of alarm, "Take care, warder! he'll murder you!" when the stone descended upon the warder's head, and he fell at once, bleeding and half senseless, upon the ground beside me. In a second, while he shrieked and struggled, the whole gang was pressing savagely and angrily around him.

There was no time to think or hesitate. Before I knew almost what I was doing, I had seized his gun and ammunition, and, standing over his prostrate body, I held the men at bay for a single moment. Then 1247 advanced threateningly and tried to put his foot upon the fallen warder.

I did not wait or reflect one solitary second. I drew the trigger, and fired full upon him. The bang sounded fiercely in my ears, and for a moment I could see nothing through the smoke of the rifle.

With a terrible shriek he fell in front of me, not dead, but seriously wounded.

"The boat! the boat!" the others cried, loudly. "Knock him down! Kill him! Take the boat, all of you!"

At that moment the report of my shot had brought another warder hastily to the top of the quarry.

"Help! help!" I cried; "come quick, and save us! These brutes are trying to murder our warder!"

The man rushed back to call for aid; but the way down the zigzag path was steep and tortuous, and it was some time before they could manage to get down and succor us.

Meanwhile, the other convicts pressed savagely around us, trying to jump upon the warder's body and force their way past to the beach beneath us. I fired again, for the rifle was double-barrelled; but it was impossible to reload in such a tumult, so, after the next shot, which hit no one, I laid about me fiercely with the butt-end of the gun, and succeeded in knocking down four of the savages, one after another. By that time the warders from above had safely reached us, and formed a circle of fixed bayonets around the rebellious prisoners.

"Thank God!" I cried, flinging down the rifle, and rushing up to the prostrate warder. "He is still alive! He is breathing! He is breathing!"

"Yes," he murmured, in a faint voice, "I am alive, and I thank

you for it. But for you, sir, these fellows here would certainly have murdered me."

"You are badly wounded yourself, 1430," one of the other warders said to me, as the rebels were rapidly secured and marched off sullenly back to the prison. "Look! your own arm is bleeding fiercely."

Then for the first time I was aware that I was one mass of wounds from head to foot, and that I was growing faint from loss of blood. In defending the fallen warder I had got punched and pummelled on every side, just the same as one used to get long ago in a bully at football when I was a boy at Rugby, only much more seriously.

The warders brought down seven stretchers,—one for me, one for the wounded warder, one for 1247 whom I had shot, and four for the convicts whom I had knocked over with the butt-end of the rifle. They carried us up on them, strongly guarded, in a long procession.

At the door of the infirmary the governor met us. "1430," he said to me, in a very kind voice, "you have behaved most admirably. I saw you myself quite distinctly from my drawing-room windows. Your bravery and intrepidity are well deserving of the highest recognition."

"Sir," I answered, "I have only tried to do my duty. I couldn't stand by and see an innocent man murdered by such a pack of blood-thirsty ruffians."

The governor turned aside, a little surprised. "Who is 1430?" he asked, quietly.

A subordinate, consulting a book, whispered my name and supposed crime to him confidentially. The governor nodded twice, and seemed to be satisfied.

"Sir," the wounded warder said faintly from his stretcher, "1430 is an innocent man unjustly condemned, if ever there was one."

VI.

On the Thursday week following, when my wounds were all getting well, the whole body of convicts was duly paraded at half-past eleven in front of the governor's house.

The governor came out, holding an official-looking paper in his right hand. "No. 1430," he said, in a loud voice, "stand forward." And I stood forward.

"No. 1430, I have the pleasant duty of informing you, in face of all your fellow-prisoners, that your heroism and self-devotion in saving the life of Warder James Woollacott, when he was attacked and almost overpowered on the 20th of this month by a gang of rebellious convicts, have been reported to Her Majesty's Secretary of State for the Home

Department, and that on his recommendation Her Majesty has been graciously pleased to grant you a Free Pardon for the remainder of the time during which you were sentenced to penal servitude."

For a moment I felt quite stunned and speechless. I reeled on my feet so much that two of the warders jumped forward to support me. It was a great thing to have at least one's freedom. But in another minute the real meaning of the thing came clearer upon me, and I recoiled from the bare sound of those horrid words, a Free Pardon. I didn't want to be pardoned like a convicted felon: I wanted to have my innocence proved before the eyes of all England. For my own sake, and still more for Emily's sake, rehabilitation was all I cared for.

"Sir," I said, touching my cap respectfully, and saluting the governor according to our wonted prison discipline, "I am very greatly obliged to you for your kindness in having made this representation to the Home Secretary; but I feel compelled to say I cannot accept a free pardon. I am wholly guiltless of the crime of which I have been convicted; and I wish that, instead of pardoning me, the Home Secretary would give instructions to the detective police to make a thorough investigation of the case, with the object of proving my complete innocence. Till that is done, I prefer to remain an inmate of Portland Prison. What I wish is not pardon, but to be restored as an honest man to the society of my equals."

The governor paused for a moment, and consulted quietly in an undertone with one or two of his subordinates. Then he turned to me with great kindness, and said, in a loud voice, "No. 1430, I have no power any longer to detain you in this prison, even if I wished to do so, after you have once obtained Her Majesty's free pardon. My duty is to dismiss you at once, in accordance with the terms of this document. However, I will communicate the substance of your request to the Home Secretary, with whom such a petition, so made, will doubtless have the full weight that may rightly attach to it. You must now go with these warders, who will restore you your own clothes and then formally set you at liberty. But if there is anything further you would wish to speak to me about, you can do so afterwards, in your private capacity as a free man, at two o'clock in my own office."

I thanked him quietly and then withdrew. At two o'clock I duly presented myself in ordinary clothes at the governor's office.

We had a long and confidential interview, in the course of which I was able to narrate to the governor at full length all the facts of my strange story exactly as I have here detailed them. He listened to me with the greatest interest, checking and confirming my statements at length by reference to the file of papers brought to him by a clerk.

When I had finished my whole story, he said to me, quite simply, "Mr. Tait, it may be imprudent of me in my position and under such peculiar circumstances to say so, but I fully and unreservedly believe your statement. If anything that I can say or do can be of any assistance to you in proving your innocence, I shall be very happy indeed to exert all my influence in your favor."

I thanked him warmly with tears in my eyes.

"And there is one point in your story," he went on, "to which I, who have seen a good deal of such doubtful cases, attach the very highest importance. You say that gold clippings, pronounced to be similar in character to the gold Wulfric, were found shortly after by a cleaner at the Museum on the cocoanut matting of the floor where the coin was examined by you?"

I nodded, blushing crimson. "That," I said, "seems to me the strangest and most damning circumstance against me in the whole story."

"Precisely," the governor answered, quietly. "And if what you say is the truth (as I believe it to be), it is also the circumstance which best gives us a clue to use against the real culprit. The person who stole the coin was too clever by half, or else not quite clever enough for his own protection. In manufacturing that last fatal piece of evidence against you he was also giving you a certain clue to his own identity."

"How so?" I asked, breathless.

"Why, don't you see? The thief must in all probability have been somebody connected with the Museum. He must have seen you comparing the Wulfric with your own coin. He must have picked it up and carried it off secretly at the moment you dropped it. He must have clipped the coin to manufacture further hostile evidence. And he must have dropped the clippings afterwards on the cocoanut matting in the same gallery on purpose, in order to heighten the suspicion against you."

"You are right," I cried, brightening up at the luminous suggestion; "you are right, obviously. And there is only one man who could have seen and heard enough to carry out this abominable plot,—Mac-tavish."

"Well, find him out and prove the case against him, Mr. Tait," the governor said, warmly, "and if you send him here to us I can promise you that he will be well taken care of."

I bowed and thanked him, and was about to withdraw, but he held out his hand to me with perfect frankness.

"Mr. Tait," he said, "I can't let you go away so. Let me have your hand in token that you bear us no grudge for the way we have

treated you during your unfortunate imprisonment, and that I, for my part, am absolutely satisfied of the truth of your statement."

VII.

The moment I arrived in London I drove straight off without delay to Emily's. I had telegraphed beforehand that I had been granted a free pardon, but had not stopped to tell her why or under what conditions.

Emily met me in tears in the passage. "Harold! Harold!" she cried, flinging her arms wildly around me; "oh, my darling! my darling! how can I ever say it to you? Mamma says she won't allow me to see you here any longer."

It was a terrible blow, but I was not unprepared for it. How could I expect that poor, conventional, commonplace old lady to have any faith in me after all she had read about me in the newspapers?

"Emily," I said, kissing her over and over again tenderly, "you must come out with me, then, this very minute, for I want to talk with you over matters of importance. Whether your mother wishes it or not, you must come out with me this very minute."

Emily put on her bonnet hastily and walked out with me into the streets of London. It was growing dark, and the neighborhood was a very quiet one, or else perhaps even my own Emily would have felt a little ashamed of walking about the streets of London with a man whose hair was still cropped short around his head like a common felon's.

I told her all the story of my release, and Emily listened to it in profound silence.

"Harold!" she cried, "my darling Harold!" (when I told her the tale of my desperate battle over the fallen warder), "you are the bravest and best of men. I knew you would vindicate yourself sooner or later. What we have to do now is to show that Mactavish stole the Wulfric. I know he stole it: I read it at the trial in his clean-shaven villain's face. I shall prove it still, and then you will be justified in the eyes of everybody."

"But how can we manage to communicate meanwhile, darling?" I cried, eagerly. "If your mother won't allow you to see me, how are we ever to meet and consult about it?"

"There's only one way, Harold,—only one way; and as things now stand you mustn't think it strange of me to propose it. Harold, you must marry me immediately, whether mamma will let us or not."

"Emily!" I cried, "my own darling! your confidence and trust in me make me I can't tell you how proud and happy. That you should

be willing to marry me even while I am under such a cloud as this gives me a greater proof of your love than anything else you could possibly do for me. But, darling, I am too proud to take you at your word. For your sake, Emily, I will never marry you until all the world has been compelled unreservedly to admit my innocence."

Emily blushed and cried a little. "As you will, Harold dearest," she answered, trembling. "I can afford to wait for you. I know that in the end the truth will be established."

VIII.

A week or two later, I was astonished one morning at receiving a visit in my London lodgings from the warder Woollacott, whose life I had been happily instrumental in saving at Portland Prison.

"Well, sir," he said, grasping my hand warmly and gratefully, "you see I haven't yet entirely recovered from that terrible morning. I shall bear the marks of it about me for the remainder of my lifetime. The governor says I shall never again be fit for duty: so they've pensioned me off very honorable."

I told him how pleased I was that he should have been liberally treated, and then we fell into conversation about myself and the means of re-establishing my perfect innocence.

"Sir," said he, "I shall have plenty of leisure, and shall be comfortably off now. If there's anything that I can do to be of service to you in the matter, I shall gladly do it. My time is entirely at your disposal."

I thanked him warmly, but told him that the affair was already in the hands of the regular detectives, who had been set to work upon it by the governor's influence with the Home Secretary.

By and by I happened to mention confidentially to him my suspicions of the man Mactavish. An idea seemed to occur to the warder suddenly; but he said not a word to me about it at the time. A few days later, however, he came back to me quietly and said, in a confidential tone of voice, "Well, sir, I think we may still manage to square him."

"Square whom, Mr. Woollacott? I don't understand you."

"Why, Mactavish, sir. I found out he had a small house near the Museum, and his wife lets a lodging there for a single man. I've gone and taken the lodging, and I shall see whether in the course of time something or other doesn't come out of it."

I smiled and thanked him for his enthusiasm in my cause; but I confess I didn't see how anything on earth of any use to me was likely to arise from this strange proceeding on his part.

IX.

It was that same week, I believe, that I received two other unexpected visitors. They came together. One of them was the Superintendent of Coins at the British Museum; the other was the well-known antiquary and great authority upon the Anglo-Saxon coinage, Sir Theophilus Wraxton.

"Mr. Tait," the superintendent began, not without some touch of natural shamefacedness in his voice and manner, "I have reason to believe that I may possibly have been mistaken in my positive identification of the coin you showed me that day at the Museum as our own specimen of the gold Wulfric. If I *was* mistaken, then I have unintentionally done you a most grievous wrong; and for that wrong, should my suspicions turn out ill founded, I shall owe you the deepest and most heart-felt apologies. But the only reparation I can possibly make you is the one I am doing to-day by bringing here my friend Sir Theophilus Wraxton. He has a communication of some importance to make to you; and if he is right, I can only beg your pardon most humbly for the error I have committed in what I believed to be the discharge of my duties."

"Sir," I answered, "I saw at the time that you were the victim of a mistake, as I was the victim of a most unfortunate concurrence of circumstances; and I bear you no grudge whatsoever for the part you bore in subjecting me to what is really in itself a most unjust and unfounded suspicion. You only did what you believed to be your plain duty; and you did it with marked reluctance, and with every desire to leave me every possible loop-hole of escape from what you conceived as a momentary yielding to a vile temptation. But what is it that Sir Theophilus Wraxton wishes to tell me?"

"Well, my dear sir," the old gentleman began, warmly, "I haven't the slightest doubt in the world myself that you have been quite unwarrantably disbelieved about a plain matter of fact that ought at once to have been immediately apparent to anybody who knew anything in the world about the gold Anglo-Saxon coinage.—No reflection in the world upon you, Harbourne, my dear friend,—no reflection in the world upon you in the matter; but you must admit that you've been pig-headedly hasty in jumping to a conclusion, and ignorantly determined in sticking to it against better evidence.—My dear sir, I haven't the very slightest doubt in the world that the coin now in the British Museum is *not* the one which I have seen there previously, and which I have figured in the third volume of my 'Early Northumbrian and Mercian Numismatist.' Quite otherwise; quite otherwise, I assure you."

"How do you recognize that it is different, sir?" I cried, excitedly.

"The two coins were struck at just the same mint, from the same die, and I examined them closely together, and saw absolutely no difference between them, except the dent and the amount of the clipping."

"Quite true, quite true," the old gentleman replied, with great deliberation. "But look here, sir. Here is the drawing I took of the Museum Wulfric fourteen years ago, for the third volume of my 'Northumbrian Numismatist.' That drawing was made with the aid of careful measurements, which you will find detailed in the text at page 230. Now, here again is the duplicate Wulfric,—permit me to call it *your* Wulfric; and if you will compare the two you'll find, I think, that though your Wulfric is a great deal smaller than the original one, taken as a whole, yet on one diameter, the diameter from the letter U in Wulfric to the letter R in Rex, it is nearly an eighth of an inch broader than the specimen I have there figured. Well, sir, you may cut as much as you like off a coin, and make it smaller, but hang me if by cutting away at it for all your lifetime you can make it an eighth of an inch broader anyhow, in any direction."

I looked immediately at the coin, the drawing, and the measurements in the book, and saw at a glance that Sir Theophilus was right.

"How on earth did you find it out?" I asked the bland old gentleman, breathlessly.

"Why, my dear sir, I remembered the old coin perfectly, having been so very particular in my drawing and measurement; and the moment I clapped eyes on the other one yesterday, I said to my good friend Harbourne, here, 'Harbourne,' said I, 'somebody's been changing your Wulfric in the case over yonder for another specimen.' 'Changing it?' said Harbourne; 'not a bit of it: clipping it, you mean.' 'No, no, my good fellow,' said I: 'do you suppose I don't know the same coin again when I see it, and at my time of life too? This is another coin,—not the same one clipped. It's bigger across than the old one from there to there.' 'No, it isn't,' says he. 'But it is,' I answer. 'Just you look in my "Northumbrian and Mercian" and see if it isn't so.' 'You must be mistaken,' says Harbourne. 'If I am, I'll eat my head,' says I. Well, we get down the 'Numismatist' from the book-shelf then and there; and, sure enough, it turns out just as I told him. Harbourne turned as white as a ghost, I can tell you, as soon as he discovered it. 'Why,' says he, 'I've sent a poor young fellow off to Portland Prison, only three or four months ago, for stealing that very Wulfric.' And then he told me all the story. 'Very well,' said I; 'then the only thing you've got to do is just to go and call on him to-morrow and let him know that you've had it proved to you, fairly proved to you, that this is not the original Wulfric.'"

"Sir Theophilus," I said, "I'm much obliged to you. What you point out is by far the most important piece of evidence I've yet had to offer. Mr. Harbourne, have you kept the gold clippings that were found that morning on the cocoanut matting?"

"I have, Mr. Tait," the superintendent answered, anxiously. "And Sir Theophilus and I have been trying to fit them upon the coin in the Museum shelves; and I am bound to admit I quite agree with him that they must have been cut off a specimen decidedly larger in one diameter and smaller in another than the existing one,—in short, that they do not fit the clipped Wulfric now in the Museum."

X.

It was just a fortnight later that I received quite unexpectedly a telegram from Rome directed to me at my London lodgings. I tore it open hastily: it was signed by Emily, and contained only these few words: "We have found the Museum Wulfric. The superintendent is coming over to identify and reclaim it. Can you manage to run across immediately with him?"

For a moment I was lost in astonishment, delight, and fear. How and why had Emily gone over to Rome? Whom could she have with her to take care of her and assist her? How on earth had she tracked the missing coin to its distant hiding-place? It was all a profound mystery to me; and, after my first outburst of joy and gratitude, I began to be afraid that Emily might have been misled by her eagerness and anxiety into following up the traces of the wrong coin.

However, I had no choice but to go to Rome and see the matter ended; and I went alone, wearing out my soul through that long journey with suspense and fear; for I had not managed to hit upon the superintendent, who, through his telegram being delivered a little the sooner, had caught a train six hours earlier than the one I went by.

As I arrived at the Central Station at Rome, I was met, to my surprise, by a perfect crowd of familiar faces. First Emily herself rushed to me, kissed me, and assured me a hundred times over that it was all right and that the missing coin was undoubtedly recovered. Then the superintendent, more shamefaced than ever, and very grave, but with a certain moisture in his eyes, confirmed her statement by saying that he had got the real Museum Wulfric undoubtedly in his pocket. Then Sir Theophilus, who had actually come across with Lady Wraxton on purpose to take care of Emily, added his assurances and congratulations. Last of all, Woollacott, the warder, stepped up to me and said, simply, "I'm glad, sir, that it was through me as it all came out so right and even."

"Tell me how it all happened," I cried, almost faint with joy, and still wondering whether my innocence had really been proved beyond all fear of cavil.

Then Woollacott began, and told me briefly the whole story. He had consulted with the superintendent and Sir Theophilus, without saying a word to me about it, and had kept a close watch upon all the letters that came for Mactavish. A rare Anglo-Saxon coin is not a chattel that one can easily get rid of every day; and Woollacott shrewdly gathered from what Sir Theophilus had told him that Mactavish (or whoever else had stolen the coin) would be likely to try to dispose of it as far away from England as possible, especially after all the comments that had been made on this particular Wulfric in the English newspapers. So he took every opportunity of intercepting the postman at the front door and looking out for envelopes with foreign postage-stamps. At last one day a letter arrived for Mactavish with an Italian stamp and a cardinal's red hat stamped like a crest on the flap of the envelope. Woollacott was certain that things of that sort didn't come to Mactavish every day about his ordinary business. Braving the penalties for appropriating a letter, he took the liberty to open this suspicious communication, and found it was a note from Cardinal Trevelyan, the Pope's Chamberlain, and a well-known collector of antiquities referring to early Church history in England, and that it was in reply to an offer of Mactavish's to send the cardinal for inspection a rare gold coin not otherwise specified. The cardinal expressed his readiness to see the coin, and to pay one hundred and fifty pounds for it if it proved to be rare and genuine as described. Woollacott felt certain that this communication must refer to the gold Wulfric. He therefore handed the letter to Mrs. Mactavish when the postman next came his rounds, and waited to see whether Mactavish any day afterwards went to the post to register a small box or packet. Meanwhile, he communicated with Emily and the superintendent, being unwilling to buoy me up with a doubtful hope until he was quite sure that their plan had succeeded. The superintendent wrote immediately to the cardinal, mentioning his suspicions, and received a reply to the effect that he expected a coin of Wulfric to be sent him shortly. Sir Theophilus, who had been greatly interested in the question of the coin, kindly offered to take Emily over to Rome, in order to get the criminating piece, as soon as it arrived, from Cardinal Trevelyan. That was, in turn, the story that they all told me, piece by piece, in the Central Station at Rome that eventful morning.

"And Mactavish?" I asked of the superintendent, eagerly.

"Is in custody in London already," he answered, somewhat

sternly. "I had a warrant out against him before I left town on this journey."

At the trial the whole case was very clearly proved against him, and my innocence was fully established before the face of all my fellow-countrymen. A fortnight later my wife and I were among the rocks and woods at Ambleside; and when I returned to London it was to take a place in the department of coins at the British Museum, which the superintendent begged of me to accept as some further proof in the eyes of everybody that the suspicion he had formed in the matter of the Wulfric was a most unfounded and wholly erroneous one. The coin itself I kept as a memento of a terrible experience; but I have given up collecting on my own account entirely, and am quite content nowadays to bear my share in guarding the national collection from other depredators of the class of Mactavish.

Grant Allen.

A LOVER'S MOOD.

O LIPS, be still, and let the heart make speech :
 Her lightest thought is far beyond your reach.
 And, worldly wisdom, unto faith give sway :
 Your brightest light but darkens this dim day.

A place to rest in, tender sense of love,
 The heart that seeks still finds,—whate'er ye prove,
 Lip-speech, earth-lore, that men account so wise,—
 Still in the dark hears lovers' sweet replies,

All heedless of the distance that divides,
 Since in all space the lover's soul abides,
 And knows and trusts the heart against its own,
 As heart by tongue to heart is ne'er made known.

Sing, then, thy song, O heart whose beat I hear :
 She is not far when thought of her is near,
 And she must hear thy singing over all
 That world-lore saith or foolish lips let fall.

Edwin R. Champlin.

OUR MONTHLY GOSSIP.

AND so Fragoletta wants to go abroad to study. Her professor tells her that only in Germany can she find the atmosphere needed for her musical development, and all her friends agree that talent such as hers deserves every chance. A year or two of study, and she may turn out a Rivé-King and win renown as a concert performer. Has she not played "Home, Sweet Home" to general satisfaction at the last church festival, and Liszt and Chopin when she graduated last year? If only she can put the seal of foreign study and approval on her work, her future will be secure. And her cousin, who has a taste for art, will go with her to study the Old Masters and perhaps get a winter's instruction later in Paris. Her brother made the usual round five years ago, and he told wonderful stories of the charming artist-life in Munich and Rome. He gave wonderful figures, too, of the rates at which the poor devils lived, and Fragoletta and her cousin, whose chief funds are in the Bank of Futurity, of which Hope is cashier, are sure they can get on as cheaply. Every one knows how much more economical—reasonably economical—women are than men; and is there not the authentic story of one young American who made "the tour of Europe for one hundred and fifty-eight dollars in currency"? Privations which would be only vulgar at home become picturesque five thousand miles away; and in the larger life and hope which the Old World promises, what are a few practical disadvantages from limited funds? And so Fragoletta and her cousin join that increasing army,—American girls studying and travelling alone in Europe.

But before the two fathers send them off, with a small letter of credit and a boundless faith in the ability of their girls to take care of themselves anywhere and always, let us see what they will find. We will suppose that they go to Germany and enter one of the small *pensions* which abound there,—*pensions*, often, sacred to ladies, and where the landlady undertakes to supply conversation as well as the table, and often, indeed, provides regular instruction to her boarders. But if the two students have the courage of their convictions and desire the natural method in all its glory, they will go into a private family, and that one where no English is understood. For not only has the smallest *pension* its gossip, but a German who has for years had American boarders learns inevitably to overlook faults of grammar and pronunciation; and fluency at the expense of correctness is no such pre-eminence that one need go abroad to get it,—though a good many people do. The *pension* has a mixed flavor: it is the native idea as to cooking and custom modified to suit the American taste. In the private family she will feel herself a stranger in a strange land; she may often be lonely and heart-sick and ask if the play is worth the candle; but she will get much more German.

In either case the simplicity of which she has heard so much will be emphasized in the bare painted floor of her room, in small and uncomfortable beds, and in two meals a day instead of three. At table is her main chance for conversation. Usually there is a little box on the board, and a penny must be slipped in it for every English phrase. Sometimes the thrifty housewife adds a fine if her careless American boarder crumbles the bread or leaves her plate uncleared.

Once in three or six months the box is opened and the contents used for some little excursion for the *pension*. In this, as in other matters, she will find a careful reckoning of the pence, and none of that leaving at loose ends so common at home. One gives notice to leave at least a fortnight in advance; one pays by the month, though unexpected circumstances take one away before it is over. The *hausfrau* is usually good-hearted and kind, but she will not know what to do for you if you are sick, and at the first hint of serious illness she will pack you off to a hospital. But it should be added that these are usually excellent and moderate in price.

Since all instruction is given in German, the language is the first conquest to be made. There are private teachers, there are circulating libraries, where she can enlarge her vocabulary by novel-reading at two or more cents a week, and there is the theatre, which she is always exhorted to attend. This is a charming way of uniting business and pleasure, and—provided she goes high up—is the cheapest of lessons. The opera, too, is cheap, and in Leipzig or Dresden a lady can go alone without remark. Beginning at six P.M., the performance is over by nine or ten, so that she need not lose her beauty-sleep in the pursuit of knowledge. Sometimes, also, one can arrange for class-lessons in German history or literature. For there has come of late in the Fatherland a demand for higher education for women, and after—at sixteen or seventeen—leaving school it is quite the fashion for the blonde maidens to take a winter of private lectures. In Berlin this has taken shape in the Victoria Lyceum,—a sort of university annex under the patronage of the Crown-Princess. Latin and mathematics are still sealed books to them, but they know their own literature as few of our girls know English, and they carry modern languages to a much greater conversational facility. The American, who, having no use for French and German at home, has only a smattering of them, is often overwhelmed by her German friend's fluency; but, to balance, the *Fräulein* is often wofully ignorant of geography and scientific subjects. Her fluency in English, too, is often acquired at the expense of the American boarder. Our interest in her tongue is largely sentimental; hers in ours is practical and business-like. Yield her a coigne of vantage through indolence or good nature, and she will practise remorselessly on you. As for French, she studies it seven years or more in the girls' high school, and it would be a pity after that if she did not know something. So the small, spectacled boy who goes by every day to the gymnasium is being trained. Nine years he is at it: for eight of them—six hours a week at that—he studies Latin, and for six Greek; and then he is just ready for the university.

The same thoroughness is required in art-study, and the bubble of *Fragoletta's* talent will soon be pricked here. She finds herself sent back to first principles, and is fortunate if after two or three years of unremitting labor she can perform just once in a public recital. "They call it three hours a day," a young Conservatory pupil said, plaintively, "and they say you must practise four more. But with the recitals, and the lectures, and the counterpoint lessons, it's more than that; and as for getting the lessons they give, as they expect you to have them, eight hours a day wouldn't be enough." She had herself broken down under it, after having come from America expressly for Conservatory training. One does not fare much better under private teachers, who, masters of technique and devoted to art, know no mercy for the weak-backed American. Incessant practice is demanded, and the amount of work assigned is often impossible of achievement. The strain is too great: only the highest talent is worth the long strug-

gle. The rest would do better to stay at home, for in the pressure of this musical atmosphere health and peace of mind are too often lost.

And what will it all cost? It is not safe to reckon less than four hundred dollars a year for the daily bread,—lessons, pleasures, excursions, and the harmless necessary patch on shoes not counted. "One is well off in a garret at twenty," sings the light-hearted Béranger; but the newspapers tell other tales of the workers in the great art-centres. The cheapness of Europe is a delusion and a snare. It is so only on condition of going without things, of living abroad as one would not think of living at home. "The first time I went abroad," a lady once told me, "I had so little money that I lay awake nights planning how I could get through on it. I learned a great deal; but I should think any one a fool now who did as I did. Ignorance of the risks I ran was my excuse." But there are numbers of these poor students still in Europe, and the straits to which they are reduced are often pathetic. Especially the slender, black-robed maidens, with their pale, eager faces, their eyes so wide open to all the wonder and enchantment of this Old World, so veiled to misconceptions of their own character, are pathetic figures. Sometimes they are pretty; almost always they have a certain charm of bright-eyed independence. They are usually older than they look; but many are far too young for the exposed and peculiar life they lead. Henry James has sketched the type in his own fashion in "A Bundle of Letters": "She looks at everything, goes everywhere; passes her way, with her clear, quiet eyes wide open, skirting the edge of obscene abysses without suspecting them; exciting, without knowing it, the most injurious suspicions; and always holding her course, passionless, stainless, fearless!"

The Germans are kind to these strangers within their gates, but to themselves they make emphatic reflections on that barbarous America whose fathers so ship off their daughters, and they pass stern judgment on those who spend their all on instruction and trust to luck to get home. Sometimes their trust is vain; and I recall one charming young woman who had stranded in Paris and was earning a meagre living as a copyist. She had come abroad to study five years before, and she was not likely to return soon. She kept house like a bird, up four long flights, and she frankly admitted her economies in bread and beef. It was picturesque, that little room, with its sunny window, its brick floor, its walls lined with her pictures, but it required some philosophy not to call her isolation a tempting of fate.

A word, too, should be said on the growing fashion of sending girls abroad to travel alone, or with only a companion of their own age. It seems incredible that persons who can afford chaperonage for their daughters often send them without it, trusting to luck and the good nature of other American travellers to help them on. A gentleman told me not long since that in his year abroad he had always some one besides his wife on his hands. Now it was a countrywoman absolutely alone, now a pair of young girls, now an invalid with a pretty daughter whom she had no strength to chaperon. There is even a book recently advertised as the doings of two girls alone abroad. Now, we have no wish to recall the proprieties of thirty years ago, when a woman could hardly make a hundred-mile journey alone; but there is a limit here, as everywhere, of good sense and prudence. We should certainly think it peculiar if Fragoletta started out to make the tour of America all alone. We should not reflect on her morals, but we should on her taste. Yet that exploit would be far easier, since no differing tongues or social customs would complicate it.

BLOWING off the merely political and controversial element of Gail Hamilton's article in the January LIPPINCOTT's, what does one find of a more real and tangible nature? That there "is no Civil Service Reform cause;" that "there is no organized, insistent Woman's Wrongs;" that "Civil Service Reform is a small and not a great matter;" that certain individuals have remained for many years in public office; that certain gentlemen have complimented our civil service; that Postmaster Pearson was appointed before the new system came into force, and was a product of former methods; that General Grant endured physical suffering, and perhaps some "mental anguish," before he died; that the flag was lowered on the Interior Department on the day of ex-Secretary Thompson's funeral; that President Cleveland (or the Democratic party, which?) is an "unwonted and unwilling wearer" of the reform; and that two counts of cash in the Treasury have shown no loss. From all these considerations it follows that the world should turn backward for a while, and the dilapidated old machine be repaired to assist the reaction. "Logic is logic, that's all I say."

The radical defect in this voluble and vigorous, if rather reckless, writer's understanding of the case seems to be a partial ethical blindness, which prevents her from seeing any need to reform any administrative evil except the crudest forms of theft and bribery.

No doubt the public service has been blamed for faults which it never possessed to any such extent as many supposed, and which it has been steadily outgrowing since the war and the extravagance which accompanied the first return of peace. Times of public disorder are naturally times of public demoralization; and the first human impulse after relief from hardship and anxiety is towards excess. But, as a rule, time cures such ailments both in the individual and the body politic; and it was inevitable that as the people at large grew saner and better the public service should improve with it. The grosser forms of evil were those which first gave way; and, after many years' acquaintance with certain bureaux at least of the Departments at Washington, I am happy to say that there is, and long has been, very little peculation, very little itching of palms, indeed.

But there is a dishonesty which does not take such universally reprobated forms,—a dishonesty which people of decency and good repute are sometimes heard to defend and even extol. I allude to the system of levying a tax on the servants of the whole people in order to provide a fund for returning to office those of one party only. This was—I suppose one may now say—obviously a robbery of the individual assessed, and indirectly, also, of nearly one-half the citizens of the United States. Is that dishonesty, or is it not?

Another form that the evil took, frequently accompanying the former, was an interference with the liberty of voting. Nothing, surely, can be clearer than that a man who sells his work and time to the people at large retains the same right to a free voice in the selection of officials and measures that he would have if he sold the same commodities to a bank or a magazine, and that to dominate and terrorize him into an insincere vote by the implied threat of discharge is simply a crime. Yet this was done, as the whole world now knows.

It is not possible for any one man to know how generally or strenuously these villainies were enforced; but he may know very well what happened to himself. I have still at hand the account which I wrote out at the time of my own collision with the machine, just before the State election in Connecticut preceding the Tilden *vs.* Hayes campaign. I was then an assistant examiner in the Patent Office, too much taken up with my work to trouble myself much about

politics. But when asked to assist the party then in power, one was forced to consider the situation and determine what he ought to do. My decision was in favor of the Democratic candidate; but I simply went on with my work. The requests became in effect demands, and I was worried and harried by frequent visits from an emissary of the State society,—still employed in the Interior Department, as I hope he will continue to be if he does his work well,—until at last I made my refusal emphatic enough to end that wretched persecution. Then they went to Secretary Chandler with a complaint against me. The chief clerk of the Patent Office sent for me and showed me a note, in Secretary Chandler's handwriting, stating that I would not "vote or pay," and calling for a "report." This report I made, stating my position clearly, emphatically denying that I owed anything, asserting that I could not conscientiously do as was desired, and embodying a positive refusal. This was just before the election. Immediately after it I received my discharge.

Now, it is very improbable that such instances could have been altogether exceptional. They were then a survival from an earlier period preceding the first attempt at introducing the competitive system, which in its partial application had already done great good. If President Grant had consistently adhered to and extended it, if he had added certainty of tenure to non-partisan qualifications, he would have had the credit which now must go to his present successor. The demand for Civil Service Reform on the lines I have indicated is not a matter of mushroom growth, as Gail Hamilton would have us think. Its roots run back to a time anterior to the Jenckes Civil Service Bill, and all the subsequent partially successful efforts and "abandoned experiments" have been in the line of solid and permanent growth. There is healthy sap in the tree, and sound fibre, and it will stand, whoever may rail against it.

Of course the reform is not complete; of course there are defects and inconsistencies in its practical working, especially in such matters of detail as must escape the eye of any President or head of a Department. The territorial division of the offices smacks of the old leaven. Logically, the best man should win, wherever he may be found; and there do seem to be instances of minor officials removed for political reasons, because the words of the law do not protect them. Besides, reforms in the methods of transacting business are not entered upon by some bureau officers as zealously as they should be. Some desirable changes have been made in such matters, but here and there the tendency still continues towards complexity rather than towards such simplicity as would reign in a well-ordered private establishment. But, after all, while we have so much to be thankful for, it is rather ungracious to play the part of the microscopist on the lookout for faults; and optimism is more wholesome than its opposite.

READERS of Tennyson's last volume may have noticed the likeness between his poem "To-Morrow" and that pathetic little story by "J. S. of Dale," "Mrs. Knollys," one of the very best of all the good things gathered together in Scribner's "Stories from American Authors." All such readers may not know that both poet and story-teller were simply infusing new life into an old legend. The story of a bridegroom or an expected bridegroom who is buried alive in a peat-bog, a glacier, or a salt-mine—that is, in some element which will preserve his body from corruption—and who years afterwards is brought to the surface and recognized by his sweetheart, she in her old age and he as fresh and juvenile as when she last saw him alive, is familiar to the folk-lore of many countries. It is

a tender and delicate offshoot from the stern old heathen myths of the underground sleepers who are to be awakened and revived at their country's call, and so, curiously enough, springs from the same parent stock as "Rip Van Winkle." Nor is the story entirely new to literature. In Germany, where it is still told as a truth in many salt-mines, it has been made the subject of a romance by Hoffmann and a short poem by Trinius. I give the latter in Baring Gould's translation.

In an ancient shaft of Falun
Year by year a body lay,
God-preserved, as though a treasure
Kept unto the waking day.

Not the turmoil nor the passions
Of the busy world o'erhead,
Sounds of war, or peace-rejoicings,
Could disturb the placid dead.

Once a youthful miner, whistling,
Hewed the chamber now his tomb;
Crash! the rocky fragments tumbled,
Closed him in abyssal gloom.

Sixty years passed by ere miners,
Toiling, hundred fathoms deep,
Broke upon the shaft where rested
That poor miner in his sleep.

As the gold-grains lie untarnished
In the dingy soil and sand
Till they gleam and flicker, stainless,
In the digger's sifting hand;

As the gem in virgin brilliance
Rests till ushered into day,—

So, uninjured, uncorrupted,
Fresh and fair the body lay.

And the miners bore it upward,
Laid it in the yellow sun:
Up from out the neighboring houses
Fast the curious peasants run.

"Who is he?" with eyes they question;
"Who is he?" they ask aloud.
Hush! a wizened hag comes hobbling,
Panting, through the wondering crowd.

Oh! the cry—half joy, half sorrow—
As she flings her at his side!
"John! the sweetheart of my girlhood!
Here am I, am I, thy bride.

"Time on thee has left no traces,
Death from wear has shielded thee;
I am aged, worn, and wasted,
Oh, what life has done to me!"

Then, his smooth, unfurrowed forehead
Kissed that ancient, withered crone;
And the death which had divided
Now united them in one.

The author of "Mrs. Knollys," it will be seen, has surpassed all his rivals in his loving portrayal of the faith and devotion of his heroine. But I wonder whether he has derived any hint from another old legend, an Irish one connected with Lough Corrib, a lake in Connemara, which runs as follows. A beautiful maiden residing on the bank of this lake was courted by two lovers. She eloped with one of them; the fugitives were pursued by the other, who caught up with them on the shores of Lough Mask, slew his successful rival, and threw the corpse into the water. Henceforth the maiden's only thought was to recover the lost body of her lover. The lake was dragged and searched in vain. A thought crossed her half-maddened brain: the body might be carried in course of time to Lough Corrib, through the subterranean streams connecting it with Lough Mask. She crossed the isthmus that divides the lakes, listened for the sound of waters, and where she heard them clearest grappled with the intervening rock and earth. The work begun by her own hands was completed by the succoring pity of others, and she sat down by the side of the deep-dug pool to watch the coming through of her beloved. Years passed on, old age overtook her, and finally, when all hope had gone, nature in its mercy transformed her into a trout, in which form she still haunts the waters and searches for her lover.

On January 5, 1886, while the first pages of this number were passing through the press, news reached us of the death of Mr. J. B. Lippincott, the original projector of the magazine, and the founder of the firm which publishes it. The news was not altogether unexpected, as Mr. Lippincott had been seriously unwell for many months and it was known that his death might occur at any moment.

Joshua Ballinger Lippincott was born in Burlington County, New Jersey. He came to Philadelphia as a lad, secured a clerkship in a book-store, was rapidly promoted, and when barely eighteen had so thoroughly mastered all the details of the business that on the failure of his employer he was put in charge of the establishment. In 1836 he began business for himself, and in 1850 purchased the entire interest of Messrs. Grigg & Elliott, then the leading house in the Philadelphia book-trade, and steadily built up his business until it reached its present magnitude.

Mr. Lippincott's distinguishing traits were untiring energy and enterprise, keen insight into men and things, a wonderful fertility of resources, and a vigorous personality which impressed itself upon all who came in contact with him. He took an active interest in everything that affected his adopted city, was a trustee of the University of Pennsylvania, president of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, and a director of several railroads, trust companies, and banks, giving faithful personal attention to all.

The following resolutions were adopted at a meeting of the publishers and booksellers of Philadelphia, held to take action upon his death :

"In the death of Mr. Joshua B. Lippincott Philadelphia mourns the loss of one of her best known and most active citizens, and the book-trade her foremost and ablest member, to whose energy, determination, and foresight is due the building up of the great house which has aided in making Philadelphia known and respected not only in this country but also over the whole civilized world. As a business-man he laid the foundation of the house which bears his name upon the broad principles of commercial honor and personal integrity, and few did more to make the name of a Philadelphia merchant respected and trusted. As a citizen he was enterprising and public-spirited, and as a wise and safe counsellor he did much to promote many of the great enterprises in which our city is so deeply interested. Straightforward in all his dealings, frank and courteous to all, he ever held to the high principle that a merchant's word should be as good as his bond. His name will be one of the memories of the book-trade of Philadelphia, and the great house which he founded and which bears his name is a lasting monument to his memory."
